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'Ki moun nou ye?' The idea of difference in contemporary French West Indian thought
Central to this article are the attempts by different 'schools' of French Caribbean thinkers to conceptualize the phenomenon of difference. Author discusses 3 principal theories of difference: Négritude, Antillanité, and Créolité. The main focus is on Martinique.

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KI MOUN NOU YE?
THE IDEA OF DIFFERENCE IN CONTEMPORARY
FRENCH WEST INDIAN THOUGHT

When Martinique and Guadeloupe became departments of France 1946, they were, despite the long-standing Francocentric orientation of their mainly colored middle class, profoundly different in cultural terms from the *mère-patrie* into which they would henceforth be assimilated politically (Jolivet 1990).¹ This cultural distinctiveness rested on, and was sustained by, an economic infrastructure which, in the case of Martinique, had consistently been in credit from 1905 onwards and would remain so until two years after departmentalization (Suvélor 1977:19). Earnings from the export of sugar, bananas, citrus fruit, and rum regularly exceeded the cost of imports from France. Peasant agriculture and fishing met the basic food needs of the local population, while most clothes, shoes, and furniture were made locally. The testing circumstances of 1940-43, when the Vichy-dominated islands were effectively severed from the outside world by an American blockade, had demonstrated the ingenuity with which Martinicans and Guadeloupeans could, when necessary, use local resources to replace the products – soap, for example, or rope – which they had traditionally imported from France.²

The *habitation* and peasant holding together formed the matrix for the colonial culture which, with variations from country to town, and with variations, too, across the class-color spectrum, was undoubtedly creole – that is, an autochthonous creation, combining a diversity of elements (principally European and African, but also East Indian and Amerindian) in a manner that is entirely distinctive, entirely *sui generis* – rather than a set of African “survivals” or a mimetic version of the culture of metropolitan

France. The creole language – a signifying system composed, very crudely, of a preponderantly French-derived vocabulary married to a syntax and morphology of basically African origin – may be seen as paradigmatic of the creole culture as a whole. Neither “African” nor “European,” but a dynamic synthesis of both with, above all, a defining identity of its own, it existed in a state of tension with the dominant French language which the colored middle classes, followed by upwardly mobile blacks, sought to master along with the French humanist culture to which it gave access. While the hostility towards creole relayed by the republican school (and by middle-class households) is not to be doubted, Roland Suvélor (1981) has argued that the relationship between creole and French in colonial Martinique and Guadeloupe was not, in terms of everyday living, as inherently conflictual as a widely held contemporary view would have it. French and creole, he claims, each had its culturally allotted space, with speakers shifting with ease and agility from one code to the other as context and circumstance demanded, creating a situation in which, despite the “official” antagonism between them, the two languages in effect complemented rather than clashed with each other.

The very disparagement of creole preserved its distinctiveness as a signifying system, protecting it from the kind of infiltration by the structures and vocabulary of standard French that is so widely attested in the contemporary French West Indies. “Officially” banished from the middle-class household, creole was in fact used by adults among themselves and by children among themselves though rarely, according to Suvélor, for cross-generational communication where French was the norm. French may have been the language of power and prestige, but creole was used on a day-to-day basis with ease, pleasure and, if Suvélor is right, with a marked absence of the anxieties and penalties generated by its use in the creolophobic context of the classroom. The relationship of French and creole, in this presentation, was one of parallelism rather than of conflict, with each preserving its separate identity and function, held apart as they were by the ideological valorization of the first and the corresponding devalorization of the second. Outside the Francocentric middle classes and those who aspired to join them, contact with the dominant language would be rare indeed: here *créolophonie* reigned with only marginal interference from standard French.

The linguistic parallelism evoked by Suvélor may be extended to cover the colonial culture as a whole. That culture was undoubtedly split between a valorized French stratum to which members of the middle classes aspired (without for that forsaking every aspect of the creole culture) and a dévalorized creole stratum to which the vast majority of the islands’ population remained confined (without, however, remaining wholly immune to aspects

of the dominant culture); the *béké* elite preserved the freedom and power to inhabit simultaneously or alternately either the French or their own variant of the creole culture. As with language, so with religion, family structure, diet, dress, entertainments, and so on: if that which was French, or perceived to be so, was systematically elevated above that which was creole, the very devalorization of the creole stratum had the paradoxical effect of preserving its integrity. But, though "officially" opposed one to the other, the French and the creole components of colonial culture were, in practice, contiguous rather than antithetical. Participation in the rituals of the Catholic Church, for example, did not exclude recourse to *quimboiseur* (sorcerer), *dormeuse* or *gadedzafé* (clairvoyants), no more than the official promotion of religious or civic marriage stood in the way of the mass of the population forming kinship relations far removed from the French ideal of the nuclear family.

The French and the creole were undoubtedly unequal, but at least they were *different*, and the relationship between them may, partly by dint of that difference, have been less conflict-ridden, and above all less anxiety-generating, than many modern conceptualizations of colonial society are inclined to admit (Suvélor 1983). To say this is in no way to idealize colonial Martinique and Guadeloupe as, ironically, many contemporary nationalists are, in their hostility to departmentalization, prone to do. Creole culture had its roots in the world of the *habitation*, but the foundation of *that* world was the gross exploitation of labor, not least that of women (the *amarreuses*) and children (the *petites bandes*). Perhaps the creole culture only preserved such vitality in colonial Martinique and Guadeloupe because the vast majority of the islands' population was denied material and educational access to the French culture above it.

Colonial Martinique and Guadeloupe were, then, unequal (both in their internal structure and in their external relationship to France) but, in some fundamental way, *different*. The *départements d'outre-mer* (DOMs) or *régions monodépartementales* that they have become are, in theory, and increasingly in fact, the equal of any "hexagonal" department or region, but they are widely perceived as having lost, or to be inexorably in the process of losing, that margin of otherness without which no human community can exist as a separate entity. Political assimilation has been accompanied, in a way that its instigators surely did not intend, by a massive assimilation not of French culture (or selected aspects of it) but by French culture as an undifferentiated totality (Suvélor 1983).³ The agricultural base on which the traditional creole culture was founded has been eroded beyond all possibility of restoration, leaving that culture – where it survives at all – increasingly bereft of any anchorage in the actual lived experience of contemporary

French West Indians and, as such, subject to a fatal combination of folklorization, exoticization, and commodification.

The modern French West Indian is, it is often argued, as much a spectator of his or her "own" culture as the average tourist: "culture," like everything else in Martinique and Guadeloupe today, is, it seems, something to be consumed rather than actively produced in a living human context. At every level – most noticeably in language, dress, diet, and kinship patterns – the otherness of the French West Indies has since 1946, and particularly since the mid-1960s, been subject to the pressure of homogenization as French goods, French thought patterns, French life-styles, and not least, the French language itself, have swept into areas of life hitherto reserved to the autochthonous culture. But it is not just life-styles that are subject to increasing standardization. The wonderfully variegated Antillean landscape is itself succumbing by the day to what the increasing number of Martinicans and Guadeloupeans who care scathingly call *bétonisation*: the remorseless spread of concrete in the form of hypermarkets and housing developments, *résidences secondaires*, motorways and service roads, hotels and marinas across the countryside and beaches of the two islands. On every front, both within and without, what Edouard Glissant (1981:166-79) has called "le Divers" (the Different) appears to be retreating before the inexorable advance of "le Même" (the Same), creating the threat of "cultural genocide" – an expression Glissant first used in a widely read article published by *Le Monde Diplomatique* in 1977 to set beside the threat of demographic "genocide by substitution" of which Aimé Césaire was speaking balefully at much the same time. The present essay takes as its theme the attempts by different "schools" of French West Indian thinkers to conceptualize the phenomenon of Difference and, hopefully to protect its various manifestations from the multifarious "creolocidal" pressures to which it is allegedly subject. Three principal theories of Difference – Négritude, Antillanité, and Créolité – are discussed, the focus being on Martinique (where each of these theories has received its fullest elaboration) while the sometimes very different preoccupations of Guadeloupean thinkers are examined in counterpoint to the *idées force* that it is my principal concern to elucidate.

NÉGRITUDE AND ITS CRITICS

Originally formulated in Paris in the 1930s, and receiving fuller elaboration in the pages of *Tropiques* during the period of Vichyst control of Martinique, the ideology of Négritude predates the departmentalization of Martinique and Guadeloupe and in many ways responds to a different set of

problems than the later concepts of Antillanité and Créolité which are essentially counters to the processes of cultural homogenization released by political assimilation in 1946. But the affective core of Négritude, as later, of Antillanité and Créolité, is anti-assimilationism. Through it, a group of French-educated intellectuals, most notably Aimé Césaire, Léon Damas, and Léopold Sédar Senghor, sought before all else to affirm their difference in the face of the reductive universalism to which their formation, relaying and reflecting the reductive universalism of the whole Republican-Jacobin tradition in France, had exposed them from early childhood onwards. This difference they formulated in essentially racial-ontological rather than historical-dialectical terms. In both colonized individual and colonized society, a surface of imposed or acquired Frenchness was held to conceal and hold temporarily captive an "African" or "black" substance or essence which it was the task of Négritude as combined theory and practice to release and bring to fruition. When it came to *defining* the "African" or "black" essence, the Négritude writers turned, *faute de mieux*, to European concepts of the primitive, particularly as expounded in the work of Lucien Lévy-Brühl, and to ideas of the "African" (or "Negro" or "black") personality contained in the writings of European Africanists such as Leo Frobenius and Maurice Delafosse. This primary recourse to the Other for a definition of Self is proof, in the eyes of the critics, of Négritude's underlying "heteronomy"⁴: it is seen not as a counter-discourse to assimilationism but as a sub-discourse within it which, even as it consciously challenges the dominant ideology, tends unconsciously to reproduce and perpetuate its underlying thought-patterns. Négritude is held both to counter but, more profoundly, to continue the universalist or essentialist assumptions of the assimilationist discourse that is its primary target: to the essence of Frenchness it opposes a putative essence of blackness or Africanness and, in so doing, fails to escape the transcendent, anti-historical terms in which assimilationism itself is formulated. Above all, Négritude may invert a stereotypical European definition of blackness and black culture, divesting it of its overtly racist character and transforming the negative into the positive, yet the underlying structure of that definition is retained. Négritude in this view merely substitutes one alienating definition for another and, to that extent, enmeshes the black African or West Indian still more tightly in the assimilationist problematic or scheme of things even as it seems to release the repressed and repudiated black "essence" within him.

Such criticisms of Négritude are by now the common currency of debate in both Francophone Africa and French West Indies (Blérald 1981) and would, in general, be accepted both by French West Indian Marxists – who were among the first to formulate them in the early 1960s (Menil 1963;

1981:62-77) and, more recently, by proponents of the counter-theories of Antillanité and Créolité. It is indeed true that the insertion of Négritude in the French West Indian context raised problems of a kind that do not seem to have arisen in the case of *Afrique Noire*, problems that relate in part to the political complexities of, especially, Martinique and in part to the difficulties of applying, without serious distortion, a universalist theory of blackness (as Négritude, at least in its earliest formulation, undoubtedly was) to societies like Martinique and Guadeloupe which, as a result of three centuries and more of sustained physical and cultural *métissage*, are certainly not – whatever else they are or may be – “African” or “black” in the immediately verifiable way in which Sénégal, Guinée, or Côte-d’Ivoire may be said to be. Ironically, as we shall see, Négritude, especially as embodied in the person of Césaire, has had the worst of both particularist and universalist worlds. Its race-based particularism brought it into conflict first (in the 1950s) with the class-based universalism of the French Communist Party and its local supporters and then (in the 1960s and 1970s) with the class-based internationalist analysis of the new – principally Trotskyist – French West Indian left. Then beginning in the late 1970s, it was Négritude’s own brand of “particularist universalism” – the belief in the existence of a global “black culture,” even of a universal “black essence” – that came under attack from proponents of the new ideas of Antillanité and, in the later 1980s, of Créolité. Having defended “black” or “African” particularity against the threat of French universalism, Négritude now stood accused of denying the West Indianness of Martinique and Guadeloupe, their complex *creole* particularity, in the name of a simplistic generalizing black universalism. To the elucidation of these and related complications the remainder of this section is devoted.

The context in which Négritude was originally formulated in the 1930s owed more to the anti-rationalism and organicism of the Right than to the dialectical materialism of the Left, but it was as a man of the Left – specifically as communist mayor of Fort-de-France and communist deputy for Martinique – that its leading French West Indian proponent, Césaire, came to the fore in 1945-46. The circumstances of Césaire’s “recruitment” by the Martinican branch (as it then was) of the PCF remain obscure, but Césaire must have seen – but presumably thought he could override – the potential conflict between the race-based particularism of Négritude and the class-based universalism of the strongly assimilationist political formation he had now joined. Césaire would henceforth be committed to the proposition that French West Indians were at once “French” politically and “non-French” in cultural, psychological, and affective terms: the pursuit of political assimilation would, ideally, go hand in hand with cultural and spiritual *dissimilation*

from the metropolitan model. When, in 1956, the tension between universalism and particularism became too great, Césaire opted for the particular, broke with the PCF and, two years later, launched his own political party, the Parti Progressiste Martiniquais (PPM). But the form of particularism espoused by the new party was a notably muted and mitigated one – autonomy not independence – as though *even now* Césaire was unable to break clearly with the universalist (i.e. effectively French) assumptions he owed to his formation within the Republican-Jacobin tradition. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Césaire and his supporters, harried from the Right by the stalwarts of departmentalization and from the far Left by out-and-out *indépendantistes*, strove in vain to reconcile the competing claims of the particular and the universal. They came close to an *indépendantiste* position in the late 1970s, yet forever failing, at the last, to break out of the assimilationist mind-set in which they had been formed. And so no doubt they would have remained, spreadeagled in a manner classically French West Indian between the Different and the Same, had not the victory of the Left in the French elections of 1981, and the subsequent policy of regionalization, permitted at least a pseudo-solution, in the form of the *région monodépartementale*, to the endemic problem of the particular-universal. In the course of the 1980s, the PPM was to establish itself as the hegemonic force in Martinican politics, drawing support from certain sections of both old Right and new (or newish) Left, though the notable advance of Alfred Marie-Jeanne's Mouvement Indépendantiste Martiniquais (MIM) in the regional elections of October 1990 and March 1992 suggests that the age-old question of the Different and the Same has only been fudged, and not resolved, by the so-called moratorium on discussions about the island-department's status that Césaire unilaterally declared in the wake of the Left's electoral victory in 1981.

As Césaire moved through what, in his "moratorium speech" of May 1981, he called his thirty-five-year journey in the political wilderness from bondage in the house of communist assimilationism to the "oasis" of socialist-inspired regionalism,⁵ so the content and meaning of Négritude in its Martinican expression shifted along with him. Under the influence of Marxism, it shed first its mystical Senghorian trappings and, contrary to the criticism routinely levelled against it, in fact moved some way from the notion of a transhistorical black "essence" to which, in *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1939), Césaire had given such memorable expression. In historicizing his concept of Négritude, Césaire also to some extent Caribbeanized it, though in his analysis of French West Indian culture he still tended to privilege the undoubted continuities between Africa and the Caribbean over the no less real discontinuities brought about by slavery. But if Caribbean cul-

ture was no longer seen simply as a set of "Africanisms," African "survivals" or "reinterpretations" of African cultural forms, neither was much prominence given to the non-African – European, East Indian, Amerindian – components in its make-up, and little emphasis was placed on the multiple processes whereby all the constituent elements of Caribbean culture interacted with each other and were transformed – creolized – into something neither "African," "European" nor whatever but seized of its own inalienable West Indian quiddity.

This preference for the "pure" (the "African" or the "European") over the "impure" (the creole) is nowhere more evident than in Césaire's attitude towards the creole language itself. Although, in the interview with Jacqueline Leiner that serves as a preface to the 1978 re-edition of *Tropiques*, Césaire denies that creole is a "patois," he goes on to describe it as a "neo-French language, or, if you like, a new African language," (*Tropiques* 1978, I:xvi) thus sidestepping – or so it could be argued – the actual creole character of creole itself. Moreover, in stating that "I have never imagined, not for one second, that I could write in another language [than French]" and that "for me, writing is linked to French and not to creole, and that's all there is to it," (*Tropiques* 1978, I:xii) Césaire had, in the view of many of his creolophile opponents,⁶ been guilty of exactly the same kind of creolophobic prejudice as the assimilationist educational system itself. His hostility to writing in creole (and, it would seem, to written creole as such) is evidence, in this analysis, of his failure, for all his talk of Négritude, Africanity and the like, truly to "decolonize" his mind and break free of the straight-jacket of the republican-universalist problematic in which he was brought up. Thus for the prominent creolophile novelist Patrick Chamoiseau (1990b:6-7), the fact that a play like *La tragédie du roi Christophe* (1963) treats a Caribbean theme is not sufficient to make it a Caribbean play for all the evident good will of its undoubtedly Caribbean author:

[The play] liberates, it raises the consciousness, but ... how French it is! ... Its French is not ours. Its sentences do not breathe like ours, our mouths will have difficulty in articulating them. In order to be at ease in them, the actor will have to become French, articulate in a French manner, think French ... Césaire treats the situation detached from the specific Haitian context [*en dehors du particulier haïtien*], with the arms of the universal seen through a European lense.

Of course, this criticism contains rigidities and unexamined assumptions of its own: it is quoted here as evidence of how readily Césaire, seemingly the arch anti-universalist, is now seen as reproducing the underlying episteme of the very universalism his works appear to denounce.

Part of the problem is that since Césaire and the PPM have implanted

themselves as the controlling force in local politics, so Négritude, or a modified version of it, has moved from being an oppositional to a quasi-hegemonic discourse. Given the close relationship of the PPM and the French Socialist party, Négritude has, in a very real sense, been recuperated by the universalist tradition (now, paradoxically, presenting itself in a decentralizing, regionalizing guise) that it originally set out to contest. In the contemporary Martinican context, Chamoiseau (1989:28) has argued, Négritude is no more than "an assertion of officialized difference" (*une revendication à la différence officialisée*): "merely to proclaim a difference that is recognized by the masters is no longer so much resistance as a form of hypnosis." The "officialization" of Négritude since 1981 has, critics argue, fundamentally changed the meaning of the annual PPM-sponsored Festival Culturel de Fort-de-France which, when it was inaugurated in 1971, was explicitly intended to counter the Francocentric cultural discourse and practice sponsored by the French government funded Centre Martiniquais d'Action Culturelle (CMAC). In 1976, the PPM-controlled municipal council of Fort-de-France set up its own "counter-cultural" organization, the Service Municipal d'Action Culturelle (SERMAC) which provided, and still provides, a permanent base for the kind of "autonomist" Négritude-inspired cultural activities favored by the PPM. So long as the PPM remained in opposition to the political status quo, SERMAC itself played a creative oppositional role on the local cultural scene, but as, once again, Chamoiseau (1989:24), has argued,

The arrival of the [French] socialists in power, in 1981, has neutralized the cultural discourse of the Mairie of Fort-de-France. France, which has always more or less denied it, now officially recognizes a distinct West Indian identity [*l'identité particulière antillaise*]. The cultural discourse of the Mairie has become in some way "official."

The consequence, according to Chamoiseau (1989:24), is that "the Festival is no longer heretical, it doesn't upset anything, it doesn't spatter people's consciousness" (*il n'éclabousse aucune conscience*). By the time of the 1990 Festival, the SERMAC was as much part of the assimilationist-regionalist establishment as the CMAC, bringing, in the name of Nelson Mandela, the Ballets Maliens, the Howard University Jazz Orchestra, and Molière to the less than ecstatic public of Fort-de-France (Chamoiseau 1990a:9-11). Its directors shuddered at the mere mention of the words "Antillanité" or "Créolité," little artistic production of significance took place under its aegis, and its increasingly dated Afrocentric discourse had ceased to engage any one but the accredited *grangreks* ("intellectuals") of the PPM. As Martinique moves towards the perils and opportunities of 1993, it is, ironically, beneath the smokescreen of "Difference" defined *à la Césaire* that the island is being drawn inexorably into the clutches of the Same.

THE DIVERSITY OF THE DIFFERENT: THE IDEA OF ANTILLANITÉ

From the early 1960s onwards, a new way of envisaging French West Indian identity began to be articulated by a number of Martinican thinkers which, in contrast to Négritude's stress on the *retention* of African cultural forms in the Caribbean, dwelt rather on the *creation*, out of a multiplicity of constituent elements, of a specifically West Indian cultural configuration to which, in time, the name "Antillanité" came to be given. It seems to have been René Ménil, a former collaborator of Césaire on *Tropiques* who, unlike him, remained in the local communist party after 1956, who, in an article entitled "Problèmes d'une culture antillaise" published in the Parti Communiste Martiniquais journal *Action* in September 1964, first clearly formulated the idea of a West Indian specificity (*spécificité antillaise*) that would enjoy such success in the years that followed. French West Indian culture, he wrote, is

neither African, nor Chinese, nor Indian, nor even French, but ultimately West Indian. Our culture is West Indian since, in the course of history, it has brought together and combined in an original syncretism all these elements derived from the four corners of the earth, without being any one of those elements in particular.

Originally intended (or so it would seem) as a PCM counter to the PPM's doctrine of Négritude, the idea of a West Indian specificity was positively received in a variety of Martinican political-intellectual circles and was, in particular, refined, elaborated, and extended by the Groupe de Recherches de l'Institut Martiniquais d'Etudes which, headed by Glissant and bringing together a diverse and talented group of thinkers (Roland Suvélor, Michel Giraud, and Marlène Hospice among others), published the results of its discussions and research in the regrettably short-lived journal *Acoma* (1971-73). The concept of Antillanité is not, however, confined to any one intellectual grouping or political formation. Indeed its strength – and also perhaps its weakness – is that it is so malleable a concept that virtually everyone in contemporary Martinique, from departmentalist "dinosaurs" to militant creolists and ultra-leftist separatists, proclaims the "specificity" of French West Indian culture and the French West Indian psyche; as indicated above, the idea of Négritude has itself been perceptibly "Antilleanized" under the influence of the rival concept. The fullest formulation of the concept of Antillanité is to be found in the work of Glissant and it is to his *Discours antillais* (1981) and *Poétique de la relation* (1990) that the interested reader is referred for an elucidation and elaboration of the ideas briefly expounded here.⁷

Like Négritude before it, Antillanité is in the first place an assertion of Difference in the face of the encroachments of the Same. The whole of

Glissant's theoretical work, in particular, may be seen as a sustained polemic, conducted in the name of the "le Divers," against the claims of the "universal," to which a succession of derogatory epithets are attached in a more or less routine fashion: "abstract," "sublimated," "reductive," "generalizing," and so on (Glissant 1981:14, 134, 245, 249). For Glissant (1981:224, 213), "the preoccupation with the universal is the alienated reverse side of the uniquely western pretension to exercise universal control"; it follows therefore that the keystone of any defense of the particular must be a "firm opposition to any ideology of 'universal culture'." Where Antillanité differs most markedly from Négritude is in its conception of the constitution of "le Divers." Whereas for Négritude, the Different was monolithic (because essentially "African" or "black" in character), "le Divers" in the thinking of Glissant and his followers is itself diverse, complex, heterogeneous; it is made up not of a single substance or essence but of a multiplicity of relations, a constellation of forces held in place by a complex process of attraction and repulsion.

In contrast to Négritude's obsession with the "pure," Antillanité makes of *le métissage*, understood both culturally and, presumably, racially, a supremely positive, indeed constitutive, principle (Glissant 1981:20). Creolization itself is seen as "unlimited *métissage*," (Glissant 1990:46) a *combinaire* of diverse cultural materials that can never be halted, fixed, or tied down, forever in the process of renewing and transforming itself. If Négritude's idea of Difference is closed, fixed, and monosemic, "le Divers" is, in contrast, open, mobile, and polysemic. Whereas Négritude shares with assimilationism an essentially "extroverted" or "heteronomous" orientation (i.e. it looked outwards to "mother Africa" for its models and values, just as assimilationism looked for its to the distant *mère-patrie*), Antillanité looks both inwards (to Martinique and Guadeloupe) and outwards (to the English and Hispanic Caribbean and, more broadly, to Meso-America as a whole) in its quest for self-invention and transcendence. One of the major advances made by Antillanité is that it has in some large measure shed the regressive, matrocentric orientation common to both assimilationism and Négritude⁸: it is less a quest for origins than a project for the future.

All these considerations are summed up in the opposition that Glissant (1990:156-58) draws in *Poétique de la relation* between "root-identity" (*identité-racine*) and "relation-identity" (*identité-relation*). By "root-identity," Glissant designates univocal conceptions of identity, those modes of thinking that would assign a single origin, a single root, to a given individual or group. "Root-identity" may be highly complex, like the tree that is its fullest expression, but it is always ultimately a mono-identity which functions by exclusion: not for nothing does Glissant (1990:23) go as far as to

speak of a "totalitarian root." "Relation-identity," on the other hand, designates an open, multidimensional, polyvalent conception of identity. Refusing the idea of a single root or origin, it conceives identity as an archipelago or constellation of signifieds, none of which enjoys primacy over the others and whose unity lies not in the fact of possessing a single source but in the complex of gravitational forces that hold them in relation to each other. Taking over the distinction made by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their *Mille plateaux* (1980) between root and rhizome⁹ (i.e. a bulb or tuber) as images of two antithetical ways of thinking about the world, Glissant (1981:134; 1989a:67) is perhaps the first major French West Indian thinker to break away from the obsession with origins and rootedness that marks traditional Caribbean discourse (and above all the ideology of Négritude) towards the idea of free-floating, multiplicitous growth whose supreme image, in the Caribbean context, is the mangrove swamp: "Submarine roots: that is floating free, not fixed in one position in some primordial spot, but extending in all directions in our world through its network of branches."

With *Le discours antillais* and *Poétique de la relation*, French West Indian thought has undergone an epistemological shift of major importance: identity is no longer imagined as a single tree rooted in the landscape (as it is in such classics of West Indian literature as Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, Jacques Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* (1946) and Jacques Stephen Alexis' *Les arbres musiciens* (1957)¹⁰ but as a tangled, proliferating growth, without beginning or end, containing within its myriad recesses infinite possibilities of interactive transformation. Négritude's concept of identity is ontological, that of Antillanité ecological: we shall return to this crucial image of the mangrove in the discussion of Créolité.¹¹

GUADELOUPEAN COUNTERPOINT

Approaches to the question of Difference in Guadeloupe have diverged in certain significant respects from those current in Martinique, not least because there was no Guadeloupean equivalent of the 1956 split in Martinique within the local communist party and, consequently, less immediate need to clarify rival positions on such crucial issues as the relationship between class and race and the racial (or other) basis of a putative Guadeloupean identity. There being, in addition, no Guadeloupean equivalents of, say, Césaire or Glissant, definitions of identity have, on the whole, been simpler there than in Martinique and perhaps for that very reason more effective and certainly more widely diffused. The idea of a "Guadeloupean nation" commands much broader support than that of a "Martinican

nation" in the sister island and, while there is certainly no unity among the autonomist-independentist groups in Guadeloupe, there do exist substantial areas of agreement as to what constitutes "Guadeloupéanité," which is certainly not the case among their counterparts in Martinique. On the other hand, if Guadeloupe has produced no theoretical construct of the subtlety of Antillanité or Créolité, it has, through the writings of women such as Simone Schwarz-Bart, Dany Bebel-Gisler, and Maryse Condé, raised the question of *female* identity in the French Caribbean with a directness and perceptiveness which, thus far, has not been matched in Martinique. In addition, the question of Indianité has been thrown into sharp focus in recent years – not surprisingly since one in six Guadeloupeans are of East Indian origin, as opposed to one in thirty Martinicans. If Guadeloupe bulks less large than Martinique in a study of the question of Difference in the French West Indies, it may be, paradoxically, because, for a whole range of historical, cultural, and political reasons, it possesses a *stronger* sense of national identity than the sister island.

If there is a key to the different way in which the question of identity has been approached in Guadeloupe, it may lie in the fact that, unlike its Martinican counterpart, the local communist party not only suffered no major internal split in the 1950s but has retained a dominant position in local politics as the principle voice of the autonomist alternative to departmentalization.¹² With not one of Césaire's personal and intellectual forces to promote it, the idea of Négritude had little influence among Guadeloupean communists who, even after they separated from the PCF to form the Parti Communiste Guadeloupéen (PCG) in 1958 (adopting an autonomist political position at the same time), continued to think along much the same class-based, assimilationist lines as before, giving priority to real or imagined class solidarity between Guadeloupean and French workers (and between black and East Indian workers in Guadeloupe) over questions of racial or national particularity. Accordingly, when independent formations like the Groupe d'Organisation Nationale Guadeloupéenne (GONG) began to challenge both departmentalism and autonomism in the 1960s, they tended to do so in the name of "race" rather than of "class"; in contrast, their equivalents in Martinique – whose principle target among the autonomist parties was the "race-based" PPM rather than the "class-based" PCM – were more inclined to speak the universalist language of class rather than the particularist dialect of race, thereby reinforcing their commitment to Martinican nationhood with a large measure of internationalism.

Thus while Martinican independentists (*Martinik* 1977, 3:2) were denouncing Césaire and Négritude for "proposing to us a false and consequently alienating African identity," it was precisely in the name of Africa-

nit  and a radicalized version of N gritude that their equivalents in Guadeloupe were mounting their attack on departmentalists and autonomists alike. Though the language of class has certainly not been jettisoned, it is clear that for GONG and for later independentist groups such as the Union pour la Lib ration de la Guadeloupe (UPLG) and the Mouvement pour une Guadeloupe Ind pendante (MPGI), "blackness" or "Africanness" are seen as essential components of "Guadeloup  nit ," raising obvious problems as far as the department's substantial East Indian minority (not to mention its significant "petit blanc" population) is concerned. As most sections of the Martinican ultra-left began, in the late 1960s, to move *away* from N gritude-style thinking,¹³ it was towards a version of N gritude, enmeshed in the language of French *gauchisme*, that their Guadeloupean equivalents turned in their struggle against departmentalism and the "socialo-communists" of the PCG.

For Guadeloupean nationalists, the Africanness that is believed to constitute the core of Guadeloup  nit  is expressed most fully through creole and through the *gros-ka*, the African-derived style of drumming which is systematically opposed in much nationalist discourse to the allegedly "French," "assimilated," or "doudouiste" music of the *biguine*.¹⁴ The defense of creole began significantly earlier in Guadeloupe than in Martinique and is associated principally with the name of Bebel-Gisler who, in a series of works of which *Langue cr ole, force jugul e* (1976) is typical, advanced a number of theses that have since become the common currency of "glottopolitical" debate in the French West Indies: the relationship between French and creole is a "colonial" one based on a fundamental and inevitable antagonism. Creole is a language of resistance, the core of the repressed cultural identity of the Guadeloupean people, the political liberation of Guadeloupe from France is inseparable from the liberation of creole from French, and so on.

As we shall see, many of these ideas will be taken over in the 1980s by the Cr olit  "school" in Martinique, but with one crucial difference. Whereas the Cr olit  school will stress, precisely, the creole (i.e. syncretic) character of creole, Bebel-Gisler (1989:23) was, as late as 1989, arguing that creole is "the umbilical cord binding us to Africa, to others, to ourselves." In other words, creole is not, as it has become in the theory of Cr olit , the basis for a *non-racial* West Indian identity but rather the expression par excellence of the underlying Africanness of Guadeloup  nit . Similarly, in systematically opposing "African" *gros-ka* to French *biguine*, nationalist discourse has, in the view of the leading (and by no means pro-departmentalist) Guadeloupean musicologist Marie-C line Lafontaine (1983:2144), been guilty of simplifying and distorting Guadeloupe's complex musical heritage and, in the

name of an illusory Africanness, denying precisely what is most creative about it, namely its capacity to bring and blend together disparate musical materials into something uniquely and quintessentially Guadeloupean. In the course of the 1980s, the *gros-ka* was promoted by the UPLG's significantly named Radio Tambour as the very essence of Guadeloupéanité, resulting, in the words of one (again by no means anti-nationalist) commentator in a "fetishization" of the instrument (Leborgne 1981:103-19) that denied the complexity of Guadeloupe's cultural heritage and, in particular, alienated the substantial East Indian minority whose support was vital if the independentist cause was to have any chance of success.¹⁵ It is hardly surprising that, as nationalist discourse beat the *gros-ka* with ever greater vigor, so many Indians would feel the need to foreground *talom* and *matalon* (East Indian drums), not (save in the case of a tiny minority) with any separatist programme in view but rather to secure their place in Guadeloupean society by underlining the East Indian contribution to its culture: the defense and illustration of Indianité is one of the most important developments in contemporary Guadeloupe.¹⁶ At the present time, Guadeloupean thought still seems preoccupied with the problems of "origins" and "roots" which, under the influence of the concept of Antillanité, many Martinicans now seem to have moved beyond. The vociferous defence of creole does not, in short, seem to have fostered a sense of the creoleness of French West Indian cultures as a whole, the guiding inspiration of the theory of Créolité in Martinique to which we now turn.

THE CRÉOLITÉ DEBATE

The idea of Créolité – most fully formulated in the manifesto *Eloge de la Créolité* (1989), the joint work of Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant – is located within the general problematic of Antillanité, the ideas and example of Glissant being constantly invoked as an essential point of reference.¹⁷ Créolité continues Antillanité's attack on "false" universalism in the name, now, of "Diversalité" (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:55). It insists, like Antillanité, on the necessary complexity of identity in the (French) Caribbean – "the very principle of our identity is complexity" (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:29) – and, in general, develops Antillanité's polemic against the "fixist," essentializing character of the discourse of Négritude in favor of a way of thinking that is altogether more mobile, open – Créolité is indeed "defined" as an "open specificity" (*une spécificité ouverte*) (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:27) – and, above all, non-racial in character:

In multiracial societies such as ours, it is urgent that we abandon the habitual racial-logical distinctions and that we resume the custom of designating the people of our countries by the one term that, whatever their complexion, behooves them: *Creole*. Socio-ethnic relations within our society must henceforth be conducted under the seal of a shared creolity [*une commune créolité*], without that obliterating in any way whatsoever class relations and conflicts (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:29).

Whereas Négritude's essentially racial definition of identity, as well as side-stepping the whole question of *métissage* in creole societies, implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) denies, or qualifies, the West Indianness of people of non-African origin, Créolité, like Antillanité, is at pains to include all autochthonous groups – African, European, East Indian, Chinese, Lebanese – in an ecumenical definition of creoleness. There has been a notable effort to demarginalize the East Indian experience in the French West Indies and to stress the contribution of “indianité” to the creole mosaic.¹⁸ In addition – and sometimes in the face of fierce criticism from rival schools of thought – Créolité readily admits the integral West Indianness of white West Indians, insisting, for example, that the white Guadeloupean-born poet Saint-John Perse – the only West Indian writer before Derek Walcott to have won the Nobel prize for literature – is every bit as “creole” in his inspiration, vision, and styles as the black Martinican Césaire (Levillain & Sacotte 1988). Créolité locates the key to West Indianness not in “race” nor even in “culture” but in *language*: to be West Indian is to speak creole, and vice versa. Créolité is at one and the same time (though with differences of emphasis from thinker to thinker) a *prise de position* on the question of the creole language, a literary practice, a way of conceptualizing not just West Indian culture(s) but also cognate cultures elsewhere (notably Réunion and Mauritius) and, beyond that, a theory, extrapolated from the (French) West Indian instance, of cultural *métissage* as a global phenomenon of increasing importance. But the creole language itself is the paradigm of creolity, and it is with recent controversies concerning its nature, status, and vocation that our discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of Créolité as theory and practice of Difference can best begin.

In the mid-1970s, a number of academics at the Centre Universitaire Antilles-Guyane, most but not all of them French West Indians, formed the Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherches de la Creolophonie (GEREC) which, through its publications *Espace créole* and *Mofwaz*, brought an entirely new vigor and passion to the study of creole and, more broadly, of cultural creolization in the French West Indies. Their actions propelled the question of creole to the forefront of local intellectual debate, whence it flowed out to engage significant sections of the population as a whole: teachers, educationalists, journalists, broadcasters and, not least, politicians and others

involved in the unending debate on the status of the French Caribbean. Two issues dominated the group's discussions. First, there was the question, often tackled but never satisfactorily resolved, of creating a single orthographical system that could adequately transcribe creole into written form: should the orthography of creole keep as close as possible to that of French (the so-called etymological system) or should it rather be rigorously based on phonetic principles and so create the greatest possible distance (*déviance maximale*¹⁹) between the acrolect (French) and the basilect (creole)? The second, allied, question concerned the relationship between acrolect and basilect and the problems caused by the emergence, under the multiple pressures of assimilation, of a whole range of interlectal forms, variously known as "français créolisé," "créole francisé," "français régional" or "antillais," "langue antillaise" (or "martiniquaise" or "guadeloupéenne") "frantillais," "francole," "fréole" or, most pejoratively, "français-banane,"²⁰ between what had, prior to departmentalization, been the clearly differentiated linguistic levels of standard French and standard (i.e. basilectal) creole. It was the perceived threat of decreolization that gave GEREC's discussions of creole and, more broadly, of creole culture their particular intensity and brought about rifts within the group which, as ever in the French West Indies, had, and continue to have, immediate political resonances and consequences.

In the course of the debate on the problem of orthography and the status of the interlectal forms between standard French and basilectal creole, two rival positions emerged which, invidiously, but, in the highly charged context of French West Indian intellectual life, inevitably, became associated with the personalities of their two leading proponents: Jean Bernabé (1989) in the case of the "radical" position, Lambert-Félix Prudent (1980, 1989, 1990) in that of the "moderate" counter-position. The "radicals" stand for the maximization, through the use of the phonetic principle, of the orthographical distance between French and creole and for the defense of basilectal creole against morphological and lexical infiltration by French, even to the point of favoring the creation of creole neologisms (*pawol nef*) such as *latouwonni* and *tirèdpotrè* for French *environnement* and *photographe*.²¹ The "moderates" advocate an orthographical system which combines phonetic and etymological principles and are notably more tolerant towards emerging interlectal forms, arguing that the relationship between French and creole is less one of opposition (diglossia) than of a continuum of overlapping linguistic forms over which the majority of French West Indians move with relative ease and assurance. Not surprisingly, these differences are coupled with, and are directly expressive of, sharply contrasted political positions. The desire of the radicals to "autonomize"²² creole vis-à-vis

French and to counter where possible the growth of an interlectal “français-banane” is symptomatic of their *indépendantiste* political stance. In contrast, the moderates’ determination to preserve the orthographical links between French and creole, and their openness towards interlectal exchanges between the two codes, is a translation into linguistic terms of their desire to preserve links with France and the French in other spheres of life and of their commitment to continuing economic, cultural and other exchanges between the metropole and its overseas departments.

“Radicals” and “moderates” are both strongly creolophile, but the kind of creole, and the associated concepts of creolity and creolization, to which they are committed differ sharply. The radicals seek to preserve the difference of basilectal creole against acrolectal penetration by French as a prelude to, and preparation for, eventual political separation from France. Their stance against decreolization, and their commitment to the principle of *déviance maximale* in writing creole, expose them to the charge of wishing to conserve a rigid “hyperbasilectal” creole that few, if any, French West Indians actually speak any more and which virtually no one, outside the inner circle of the GERECE, is capable of reading without first – and usually with great difficulty – oralizing the phonetically transcribed text. For their part, the moderates, in their tolerance of interlectal convergence between French and creole, may be favoring, willy-nilly, the eventual disappearance of creole as a distinct signifying system, hastening, by their very openness, its “glottophagic” absorption by standard French. On the one hand there is that threat of ossification and impoverishment in an exclusivist defense of Difference at all costs, on the other the threat of dissolution of the Different in the Same – precisely the same threats, in other words, that in the present French Caribbean context, are inseparable from the independentist and regionalist-assimilationist positions respectively.²³

The theory of Créolité emerged from the radical wing of the creolist movement, but there are significant differences of emphasis, indeed possibly differences *tout court*, among the three signatories of *Eloge de la Créolité*. The manifesto insists on the need for an “annihilation of false universality, monolingualism, and purity,” on the heteroclitic internal structure of the creole “diversality” that is contrasted to it and on the impossibility of ever fixing or defining the “maelstrom of signifieds” that constitute the “kaleidoscopic totality” that is Créolité. The whole contemporary world is said to be “evolving towards a condition of creolity” (*le monde va en état de créolité*), that “new dimension of man, of which we are the prefiguration in silhouette” (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:27-28, 52, 27).

It is at this point that a number of tensions begin to emerge between the theory of Créolité and the actual practice of its leading proponents. First,

Bernabé's resolute defense of basilectal creole against interlectal corruption appears to run against the open, progressive, innovative quality attributed to Créolité itself. Being the product of a myriad of human-cultural-linguistic exchanges, creole (and, by implication, creole cultures more generally) are apparently to be "frozen" at a particular stage of their development and denied the possibility of entering into further combinatory interaction with other cultures. Second, while the interlect is said by *Eloge de la Créolité* to represent a "danger of surreptitious but terribly effective alienation" (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:59) it is precisely the interlectal space between standard French and basilectal creole that Chamoiseau and Confiant have invested and exploited so imaginatively in the literary works they have published in France, thereby earning a more or less open reprimand from their fellow signatory (Bernabé 1988-89:37-41). Moreover, though Créolité is in theory oriented towards the future, what is in practice celebrated in its name – the *djobeurs* (market porters) in Chamoiseau's first novel *Chronique des sept misères* (1986), the *conteur créole* (creole folk story-teller) in its successor *Solibo Magnifique* (1988), the *épicerie créole* (creole grocery) evoked in his recent account of his childhood in the Fort-de-France of the 1950s, *Antan d'enfance* (1990) – has disappeared, or is in the process of disappearing, like basilectal creole itself, in the monolithic, monolingual, monocultural world being progressively installed by integral assimilation in its regionalist guise. Prospective and progressive in theory, Créolité is in practice often retrospective, even regressive, in character, falling back, in a last desperate recourse against decreolization, into the real or imagined creole plenitude of *an tan lontan* (olden times), of Martinique and Guadeloupe as they were before the "fall" of departmentalization or the massive disruptions of the 1960s. There is a danger, in short, that Créolité may itself be falling prey to the trap of universalism and essentialism so vigorously denounced in the *Eloge*. The dread suffix *-ité* is always capable of injecting what Barthes called the "virus of essence" into even the most dynamic historical concept, and there may be grounds, as Glissant (1990:103) has recently indicated, for preferring the verbal expression *créolisation* to the abstract and nominal *créolité* which, he cautions, runs the risk of regressing towards the "generalizing Négritudes, Francities, and Latinities" against which it protests so vociferously.

A striking feature of créolité is its close association with the burgeoning Martinican ecological movement ASSAUPAMAR (Association pour la Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Martiniquais) and it is an ecological image, the mangrove swamp, that Bernabé has himself put forward as a remedy to the threat of rigidification and re-essentialization to which the theory and practice of Créolité are undoubtedly exposed. The *Eloge* "defines" Créolité as a

"mangrove of potentialities" (*une mangrove de virtualités*) (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:28) in which, as new forms are being born, so others die, in which everything interpenetrates with everything else and in which, by definition, nothing can be defined or fixed. The same image is used by Chamoiseau (1990c:32-34) in a report on the 1990 meeting of the international creole association Banzil Kreyol to evoke the relationship between the basilectal creole defended by GEREK and what he disarmingly calls the "natural creole," incorporating a host of interlectal and acrolectal forms, actually spoken by the majority of French West Indians. Describing GEREK as "a kind of creole super-ego" (and Jean Bernabé as the "Pope of creole"), Chamoiseau, following Bernabé, speaks of basilectal creole and standard French as of two contiguous mangrove swamps linked by an intermediary mangrove where interlectal exchanges between basilect and acrolect take place and where "natural creole," *an Kréyol mitannnyé*, is constantly in the process of being formed and reformed, combining and recombining elements drawn from the other two mangroves into ever-changing syncretic patterns. In this presentation, the three mangroves are essential to each other's continuing vitality; they must somehow both be kept apart, each preserving its own identity, and maintained in communication with each other lest they stagnate and are drained of life, at which point, like so many actual mangrove swamps in Martinique and Guadeloupe, they will succumb to *bétonisation* by and in the name of the Same. According to Chamoiseau (1990c:34) (again he is repeating Bernabé's argument), this ecological model opens up a whole new way of imagining the relationship between basilect, interlect, and acrolect:

To think of the linguistic space [of the French West Indies] as an eco-system avoids a great deal of sectarianism, and opens the way for beneficial interactions. GEREK will henceforth seek to put this ecology of languages into practice. The basic principle is that there exists in Martinique, for the reasons that we know and with the imbalances that we know, an ecological niche for creole and an ecological niche for French. And that these niches have their place in the Caribbean linguistic eco-system, an eco-system which, in its turn, is coiled up in that of the world as a whole. To think in this fashion makes it possible to understand that the defense of creole is inseparable from the defense of all other languages; that the collapse of one language would impoverish all the others; that to kill off French would curiously diminish the vitality of creole; and that the question of creole must be thought through in conjunction with the political, economic, and cultural eco-systems of the region, in a state of openness towards the Caribbean as a whole, and in the presence of the rest of the world.

The ecological model thus offers at least the *possibility* of fruitful interactions between the Different and the Same in which the identity of each would be preserved while permitting a third interlectal space – the space which, culturally and linguistically, the majority of French West Indians

actually inhabit – to develop and thrive between them. If Créolité is to avoid the pitfall of nostalgic essentialism to which Négritude in time fell pray, it must, without turning its back on the cultural and linguistic basilect, open itself out towards the intercultural domain where without question the most dynamic and creative developments in the French Caribbean are currently taking place. On the evidence of Chamoiseau's article, its leading proponents are well aware of this need, and are actively engaged in making the necessary adjustments of theory and practice.

CONCLUSION: LES MARRONS DE LA DIFFÉRENCE

We have, therefore, three principal ways of thinking Difference in the contemporary French West Indies: the pre-modern (Négritude), the modern (Antillanité) and – when it resists its penchant for nostalgia – the post-modern (Créolité).²⁴ Identity as monad, as relation, as mosaic (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1989:53); as root, rhizome, and mangrove. But can *any* of these constructions of Difference ultimately resist the relentless advance of the Same across the physical, cultural, and psychological landscape of Martinique and Guadeloupe? Each of the theories of Difference discussed here presupposes the existence of what Glissant calls an *arrière-pays*, (Glissant 1981:166 and *passim*) a hinterland, at once physical, cultural, and psychological, in which individual and community can find refuge from the advancing empire of the Same, as the runaway slaves of old fled plain and plantation for the upland fastnesses of the *mornes* (hills). But now the hinterland is disappearing month by month and year by year, ingested physically by *grandes surfaces*, golf courses, secondary residences, and marinas, and culturally and psychologically by the remorseless spread of “French” patterns of thinking, consuming, acting, and speaking. For the would-be maroon²⁵ in contemporary Martinique and Guadeloupe there is practically nowhere, either within or without, in which to live and from which to speak, that has not already in some way been taken over by the dominant discourse, so that the language of Difference is often uncannily transformed, without the speaker's knowledge, into the language of the Same, and the status quo is sustained and perpetuated by the very counter-discourse it provokes. As Glissant (1981:171) wrote, “*there is nothing (by way of contestation and opposition) that cannot be recuperated here by the system*” [emphasis EG].

Since Glissant wrote these words, the recuperative capacity of “the system” has become even greater with the implementation of the French socialist government's regionalizing policies in the early 1980s. Where once visiting ministers of the DOM spoke the language of Sameness, stressing the

overwhelming Frenchness of Martinique and Guadeloupe, they have since 1982 taken over the language of (relative) Difference and routinely emphasized the need to foster the now regionalized overseas departments' "right to be different," to promote their "distinct cultural identity" and to take measures to ensure the "deepening of the West Indian soul" (*l'approfondissement de l'âme antillaise*),²⁶ stopping well short, needless to say, of the point at which separation, or even a meaningful degree of autonomy, from France might become a serious possibility. By this means not only has Négritude become, in Chamoiseau's words, already quoted, "an assertion of officialized difference," but the concept of Antillanité has also been absorbed back, in a modified form, into the dominant discourse, its insistence on the heterogeneity of West Indian identity falling in perfectly with recent assimilationist-regionalist thinking about "la France créole." Even the idea of Créolité – perhaps the most radical assertion of Difference in the French Caribbean to date, given that the creole language was always the most heavily stigmatized, and hence least readily recuperated, aspect of the creole culture – is susceptible to neutralization in the name of regionalism. Creole is now "officially" recognized by the Diplôme Universitaire de Langue et Culture Créoles (DULCC) run by the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane, some school classes are, with ministerial encouragement, taught in and on it, and the would-be subversive "fusion" of French and creole practiced by Chamoiseau and Confiant in their novels is regularly hailed by metropolitan critics for its "enrichment" of French through the structures and vocabulary of creole ... Identity is no sooner constructed in the French West Indies than it frays and dissolves back into the ocean of universalism from which it was drawn and where assimilationism, that Proteus, waits to absorb it back into itself. So long as Martinique and Guadeloupe remain politically attached to France, there seems no way of staunching this hemorrhage of the Different into the Same, and no guarantee, of course, that political independence would arrest what may be an inexorable process.

Finally, of course, the universal may not *always* be quite the wholly negative, wholly destructive force that almost all recent French West Indian thinkings seems routinely to assume. In a series of trenchantly argued essays, the Guadeloupean philosopher Jacky Dahomay (1989a; 1989b) has challenged the way many French West Indian writers – he is thinking chiefly of Glissant and the authors of *Eloge de la Créolité* – automatically reject "all verticality, all transcendence" in the name of "le Divers" or "Diversalité," contending rather that *some*, at least, of the values relayed by "the universal" (notably those enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and subsequent international accords on human rights) are indeed universal and not to be rejected out of hand as "abstract" or "false" or relativized out of existence

simply because they are "imported" from France or elsewhere and not produced in the West Indies, for West Indians, by West Indians (Dahomay 1989a:127, 131). Rightly stigmatizing (1989b:17) the "militant antidemocratism" of many *indépendantistes* in Guadeloupe (and, though he does not say so, in Martinique as well) and mindful, no doubt, of Duvalierist Haiti with its grotesque parody of Négritude, Dahomay (1989b:130) argues that "there may exist tomorrow independent West Indian political systems, completely creole [*en toute créolité*], in which human beings can be massacred." French West Indians, he goes on, have always, when given the choice, preferred "the universal" (meaning equality with other French citizens) to "the particular" (meaning political separation from France), and there is no sign that they will in the future do and think any differently. The pursuit of equality and the pursuit of identity are, in short, antithetical in the French West Indies and, so long as this remains so, the democratic choice of French West Indians will, he says, be in favor of equality even if it entails a comprehensive loss of identity at the political, economic, cultural, linguistic, and psychological levels (Dahomay 1989b:23-24).

If Dahomay is right, and French West Indians always opt for (French) citizenship and equality rather than (West Indian) nationality and identity, then the prospects for Difference, and those who would defend it, are grim indeed. The time is surely past – if it ever existed – when it was possible to posit a single identity in which all French West Indians could find themselves, whether that identity was constructed on the basis of race, culture, language, or the simple fact of being born and living in Martinique or Guadeloupe. On this last point, it is no longer possible – if, again, it ever was – to draw an absolutely clear distinction between autochthonous, resident Martinicans and Guadeloupeans and so-called *néropolitains* or *zoreils noirs*, the 400,000 French West Indians living in metropolitan France (one third of them actually born there) who regularly revisit family and friends in the DOM, bringing with them French attitudes, French life-styles and, increasingly, French accents. French West Indians, Alain Anselin (1990:266) has written, no longer emigrate and return, they *circulate*, their endless to-and-fro movement across the Atlantic and back further eroding already fragile images of self, deconstructing the opposition of "here" and "there," and causing the distinction of the Different and the Same on which so much French West Indian thought is based to collapse on the crowded concourses of Le Raizet, Le Lamentin, and Orly/Charles de Gaulle. For this and other reasons, any French West Indian identity must be open, flexible, complex, and contradictory. It is the great merit of the theory of Créolité to have recognized this, even though in practice it too often goes against this forward-looking intuition with a regressive attachment to the real or imagined

creole plenitude of the past. Yet the very open-endedness of creole identity, if it offers endless opportunities for creative exchange with other cultures, also exposes them to absorption by and into them, and one can understand Glissant's (1981:245) belief in the need to "opacify" such difference that remains in the hope of preserving it from the "transparencies" of the universal. For the would-be-maroons of contemporary Martinique and Guadeloupe, particularly the former, there is no going back on the traces of the runaways of old. Inexorably, or so it seems, the mangroves are drying up or being polluted or drained, inexorably the monolithic world of *béton*, having conquered the plains, is now encroaching on the complex creole ecosystems of the *mornes*. There is no elsewhere, no exteriority, no *arrière-pays* for the modern maroon, no possibility of getting wholly outside the system in order to resist it.²⁷ All that is left is opposition from within the system, along the cracks and fissures left by the onward march of concrete. It is here, in the gaps between the Different and the Same, along the advancing edge of the plain and what is left of the *mornes*, that the modern maroon must henceforth play out a complex and ironic oppositional game.

NOTES

1. Space, and the present writer's lack of competence, make it impossible to give Guyane the attention it deserves. For an illuminating comparison and contrast between the meanings of the word "creole" in Martinique and Guyane, see Jolivet 1990.

2. See Revert 1977. The self-sufficiency of the island economies between 1940 and 1943 is, at the cost, it must be said, of some idealization, a common topos in contemporary nationalist discourse and forms a major theme in Raphael Confiant's (1988) magnificent novel on Martinique under the Vichy regime.

3. For the distinction between "assimilation of" and "assimilation by," see Suvélor 1983:2197-98.

4. For an excellent discussion of Négritude from this viewpoint, see Lucrèce 1971.

5. The speech – essential for an understanding of contemporary Martinique – is reproduced in full in *Le Naïf* 329 (Fort-de-France, June 3, 1981). For an incisive discussion of the issues it raises, see Constant 1989.

6. For the militant creolist Jean Bernabé (1983:205) creole possesses no "anthropological density" (*épaisseur anthropologique*) in Césaire's eyes: "it is only the index of the Negro's subjugation and the recurrent symptom of the loss of Mother Africa."

7. A selection of the most important texts in *Le Discours antillais* has been translated into English under the title *Caribbean Discourse* (1989). The introduction by translator J. Michael Dash (pp. xi-xxv) is the best guide available to the complexities of Glissant's thinking.

8. On this subject, see the important and controversial essay by André 1983.
9. I have discussed Glissant's use of the root-rhizome distinction elsewhere (Burton 1990).
10. For a valuable discussion of the tree image in French West Indian writing, see Ormerod 1985:28-29.
11. Significantly, the mangrove frequently suggests torpor and stagnation in Césaire's poetry, see the poems *Mangrove* and *La Condition-mangrove* in his most recent collection *Moi, laminaire...* (Césaire 1982:25, 30, translations in Césaire 1990:107, 117).
12. The PCG has recently adopted an independentist position, partly as a response to the perceived threat of 1992, partly to avoid being outflanked by the far left. Nonetheless, its autonomist leaning remains strong, and it is not difficult to imagine it reverting to an autonomist position as and when circumstances require.
13. For discussion of this, see Burton 1978:52-56.
14. See the anonymous statement cited by Lafontaine (1983:2145): "Even if the quadrille and biguine are played in county areas in Guadeloupe, they cannot, by virtue of their origin, their style and their assimilationist character, represent the authentic music that expresses the Guadeloupean soul in its depths."
15. On the exclusion of East Indians by nationalist discourse, see Zandwonis (1990:5).
16. The key contributions to the Indianité debate are Moutoussamy 1987 and Sulty & Nagapin 1989.
17. According to Chamoiseau (1989:8), "the concept of Créolité is formulated through and with the thought of Glissant."
18. See above all the special number of *Carbet* (No. 9, December 1989) on "L'Inde en nous, des Caraïbes aux Mascareignes." The coordinator of the number, Gerry L'Etang, is close to the Créolité "school" of thinkers. There is certain vogue for "indianité" in contemporary Martinique whose implications, political and other, I discuss in Burton 1993.
19. The term "déviance maximale" is associated with the work of Jean Bernabé. For a full discussion of the orthographic controversy, see Bernabé 1983:296-348.
20. The term "français régional" (or "antillais" is favored by well-known creole linguist Marie-Christine Hazaël-Massieux, while "langue martiniquaise" (or "guadeloupéenne") is preferred by noted linguist Lambert-Félix Prudent. The term "francole" was suggested in 1980 by the Guadeloupean writer Germain William, in an early attempt to use the interlect as a literary language. "Français-banane" is a catch-all term, commonly used by opponents of Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphael Confiant to describe the "franco-créoloïde" language of some of their literary works.
21. These examples are taken from the glossary of creole neologisms in Confiant 1987:139-40.
22. The expression "autonomisation du créole" is used by Bernabé (1983, 1:307) in opposing phonetic orthography to its etymological rival which, he says, maintains creole in a state of "objective dependence on the French language."
23. Phonetic orthography is, in general, adopted in independentist publications such as *Douvanjou*, *Magwa*, *Jougwa*, and *Ja ka ta* (Guadeloupe) and *Grif an Te*, *Kabouya*, *Antilla*, and *Koubari* (Martinique) as well as by the creole language edition of the *Courrier de l'Unesco*, *Kourilet*. In 1988 the moderate creolists joined other anti-independentist intellectuals in establishing the *Nouvelle Revue des Antilles*; the prominent PPM (and ex-Trotskyist) mayor of Robert, Edouard De Lépine, is a member of its editorial board and, in general, it adopts a "regionalist" position against the independentist implications of the idea of Créolité.

24. For an interesting discussion of Créolité and post-modernity, see Blanquart 1990.
25. The theme of the maroon, whom Glissant (1981:104) calls "the one true popular hero in the West Indies," and his modern equivalents or analogues – the runaway criminal (Beauregard and Marny in Martinique), the *quimboiseur*, the Rasta, the political fugitive (Luc Reimette, Henri Bernard, and Humbert Marboeuf in Guadeloupe) – is to be encountered everywhere in contemporary French West Indian thought and literature. See, for example, Louise 1990. The theme of marronnage in Glissant's work is discussed in Pépin (1990:88-99), and there is an illuminating comparison between Beauregard, Marny, and the maroon in Hospice (1984:143-52).
26. Such language was also spoken during the later years of the Giscard presidency, see Bebel-Gisler 1989:182-84.
27. For the distinction between "opposition" and "resistance" on which this conclusion is based, see De Certeau 1980:3-43.

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'AMERICANITÉ' OR 'ANTILLANITÉ'? CHANGING
PERSPECTIVES ON IDENTITY IN POST-NÉGRITUDE
FRANCOPHONE CARIBBEAN POETRY

In the 1939 *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal*, Aimé Césaire adumbrates a vision of regional identity which prefigures the concern of later generations with re-defining the geographical frontiers of belonging. Césaire's (1983:46-47) world begins with his own "calabash of an island," but the limitations suggested by this image of confinement are denied, a few lines further on, by the identification of Martinique as "my nonfence island":

What is mine, these few thousand deathbearers who mill in the calabash of an island and mine too, the archipelago arched with an anguished desire to negate itself, as if from maternal anxiety to protect this impossibly delicate tenuity separating one America from another; and these loins which secrete for Europe the hearty liquor of a Gulf Stream, and one of the two slopes of incandescence between which the Equator tightropewalks toward Europe. And my nonfence island, its brave audacity standing at the stern of this Polynesia, before it, Guadeloupe, split in two down its dorsal line and equal in poverty to us, Haiti where négritude rose for the first time and stated that it believed in its humanity and the funny little tail of Florida where the strangulation of a nigger is being completed, and Africa gigantically caterpillaring up to the Hispanic foot of Europe its nakedness where Death scythes widely.¹

What is striking in the Césairean map of identity – so meticulously drawn – is the poet's refusal to be limited to one familiar island or even to the archipelago itself, whose curved shape becomes a metaphor for the situation of Caribbean man, not yet recovered from the prostration of slavery. The counter-discursive strategy of this Martinican/"black Frenchman" is revealed as he elaborates an Afrocentric world view, locating himself within an extended family in which Haiti, solitary in its upright posture of defiance

("Haiti where négritude rose for the first time"), occupies a position of privilege.

Despite the obvious parallels, however, Césaire's early vision of community differs significantly from that emerging in the literature of the last few decades, which may seem to constitute a deconstruction of Négritude, with its sometimes Manichean emphasis on racial difference. Other designations, such as that of "Antillanité" and the more recent formulation "Créolité," have sought to capture what is clearly a complex and even elusive reality. What these different options (perhaps way-stations in the quest for identity?) have in common with Césaire's position is refusal of both insularity and universalism – the menace of "dilution dans l'universel" (1956:15) made real by political integration into a distant Metropolis. Indeed the extent of the concern of French Caribbean intellectuals with the sort of self-definition epitomized by the term "négritude" is an ironic reminder of the still powerful hold on their people's imagination and political life by the colonial other, whose presence and dominance make compelling the assertion of difference.

Edouard Glissant, the outstanding poetic voice of the post-Négritude era, is the primary theoretician of "Antillanité," a concept which focuses on the reality of Caribbean syncretism and the project of Caribbean integration.² The notion of "Américanité" referred to in the title of this article is more problematic, since it posits the existence of a "New World" identity, or at least experience, encompassing the peoples of the Americas *and* the Caribbean.³ The term "créolité", on the other hand, shifts the focus of attention from geographical proximity to the fact of creolization. It is clear, however, that these concepts overlap to some extent, and a particularly enigmatic formula used in the provocatively entitled *Eloge de la créolité*, translated as *In Praise of Creoleness* (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1990), hints at the hazards of categorical pronouncement, of applying exclusive labels to an evolving identity: "Because of its constituent mosaic, Creoleness is an open specificity" (Bernabé, Chamoiseau & Confiant 1990:892). The present analysis is particularly concerned with the notions of Antillanité and Américanité as they relate to the work of two poets: Sonny Rupaire and Alfred Melon-Degras. This preliminary exploration of the complex semantics of self-definition is intended as a reminder of the varying impulses and allegiances which may confront the francophone Caribbean writer wrestling with a still-beleaguered identity.

Both Rupaire and Melon-Degras stretch and reach beyond island frontiers to assert a regional belonging. It is surely pertinent to note that their earliest published poems date from the late 1950s and the 1960s respectively, coinciding with a season of discontent with the departmental status –

a season marked by the increased repressiveness of the régime⁴ at a time when Caribbean neighbors and West African colonies alike were attaining independence.

The Martinican Melon-Degras is manifestly drawn to a Latin American identity, and one senses in his work "continental" yearnings which may reflect a claustrophobic need to escape the narrow confines of island space. Rupaïre, on the other hand, moves, in the collection *...cette igname brisée qu'est ma terre natale* (1973), from the image of the island as fragment (the "broken yam" of the title) to that of his native Guadeloupe as integral part of a regional, "American" whole. Both writers interrogate the Eurocentric assumption of the islands' insignificance, an assumption implicit in the famous statement made by Général de Gaulle during a visit to Martinique, quoted by Edouard Glissant in the epigraph to *Le discours antillais* (1976): "Entre l'Europe et l'Amérique, je ne vois que des poussières" ("Between Europe and America, I see nothing but dust").⁵

L'Habit d'arlequin (1974), Melon-Degras' first volume of poetry, is divided into sections which reveal the range of concerns of this Martinican of several worlds, patently ambivalent about his prolonged Parisian exile. The section entitled "Antillana" contains the poem *Fort-de-France* (1974:59), which presents a disquieting vision of futility and deprivation:

Sur la mer, sueur de ton front d'île,
sueur de ton bras vivant de Caravelle,
étranger à ma terre,
j'arrime à ton port.

...

L'imaginaire nombril renfrogné d'île
d'archipel, de continents,
est une lente convulsion d'ombres.

On the sea, sweat of your island forehead,
sweat of Caravelle your living arm,
stranger to my land,
I dock at your port.

...

The glum imaginary navel of island
of archipelago, of continents,
is a slow convulsion of shadows.

It is important to note that the poet moves, in a few brief lines, from the image of the island as vital, essential (Melon-Degras is no doubt alluding to

the colonial vision of Martinique as “gateway to the Americas”) to that of a marginal, “zombified” world. This deconstruction of the exotic stereotype of the island is continued in the bitter first lines of *O mon pays* (1974:54), in which one hears an ironic echo of de Gaulle’s dismissive words:

O mon pays honni dans ma chair
 aimé dans ta chair,
 émeraude des chants folkloriques
 perle des prospectus,
 poussière d’Antilles
 poussière de soleil!

Oh my country spurned in my flesh
 loved for your flesh,
 emerald of folk songs
 pearl of brochures,
 Antillean dust
 sun dust!

These lines are striking in their focus on contradiction and duality: that of the European outsider objectifying “native” and landscape, despising the one and celebrating the other, but also that of the Caribbean persona, whose visceral connection to this land/object does not preclude a certain distance as he contemplates a reality trivialized by the Other’s gaze.

In striking contrast to the ambiguous patriotism of *O mon pays* is the exuberant celebration of “America,” in the poem of that name from the section entitled “Tiers-Monde” (“Third World”). Melon-Degras (1974:107) identifies with a “continental splendor” which he associates with the pre-Columbian era:

Nous avons la poésie des noms qui chantent;
 Potosi, Aconcagua, Sierra Maestra,
 qui chantent la splendeur continentale,
 – Teotihuacán, Yucatán, Tulán, Chichén Itzá –
 et la syncope précolombienne d’apogée.

We have the poetry of names that sing;
 Potosi, Aconcagua, Sierra Maestra,
 that sing of continental splendor,
 – Teotihuacán, Yucatán, Tulán, Chichén Itzá –
 and the pre-Columbian syncopation of apogee.

This poem offers a striking example of the importance of naming for the historically dispossessed: through a ritual enumeration of sonorous place names, Melon-Degras reclaims the power wrested from the indigenous "American" peoples by the *conquistador*. These names appear to confer on the continent an ontological reality absent in the poet's evocation of his own country, whose place names bear the stamp of colonialism. (In the poem already cited, the name "Fort-de-France," which defines the "capital" of Martinique as French possession and stronghold, is used as an ironic refrain.)

That the evocation of a grandiose past is not innocuous becomes clear a few lines further on (1974:107), as "the poetry of names that sing" becomes the poetry of revolution:

... me redire la poésie des noms qui chantent,
et la voix des fleuves qui grondent la ferveur,
et le sang de la terre spoliée,
et le chant de la terre qui s'insurge...

... repeating to myself the poetry of names that sing,
and the voice of rivers which rumble their fervor,
and the blood of the plundered land,
and the song of the rebellious land...

The emphasis in this poem on the vast rivers of the continent may appear to reflect a Latin American rather than an exclusively West Indian sensibility: whereas island identity is delimited by the surrounding waters of the sea, Melon-Degras is able to suggest endless possibility and power by focusing on the fast-flowing rivers of South America – recalling Césaire's invocation of the Congo in the *Cahier*. In the following lines (1974:106), the impressive physical presence of the continent is implicitly contrasted to its commercial exploitation, and its formidable rivers seem to speak a warning:

Redites-moi les clameurs latentes du Popocatepetl
et le fugace délire utile de l'Orénoque.
Redites-moi l'aube de terre du Parana
et les tentacules à brandir de l'Amazone...
le guano du Pérou, la canne de Porto-Rico,
le bétail argentin, les bananiers du Guatemala
et la malédiction primordiale du ver dans le fruit
de la United Fruit.

Tell me again of the latent clamor of the Popocatepetl
 and the fleeting necessary delirium of the Orinoco.
 Tell me of the awakening earth of the Parana
 and the tentacles to be brandished by the Amazon...
 and the guano of Peru, the cane of Puerto Rico,
 Argentine cattle, Guatemalan banana-trees
 and the original curse of the worm in the fruit
 of United Fruit.

The last lines quoted make it clear that Melon-Degras' *Américanité* is not predicated on an assumption of affinity with all the peoples of the New World; the full ambiguity of the title emerges here. Later lines of the poem (1974:108) reveal a vehement anti-"Americanism" which is in marked contrast to the almost liturgical solemnity of the beginning:

Je dis que le Texas est au Mexique
 et qu'à plus forte raison
 le Panama est au Panama,
 le Vénézuëla est au Vénézuëla,
 l'Equateur à l'Equateur,
 le Honduras au Honduras
 et Cuba à Cuba.
 Je dis que les valets sont aux yankees,
 que les crimes de la C.I.A. sont aux yankees...

I say that Texas belongs to Mexico
 and all the more so
 Panama to Panama,
 Venezuela to Venezuela,
 Ecuador to Ecuador,
 Honduras to Honduras
 and Cuba to Cuba.
 I say that the valets belong to the Yankees,
 that the CIA crimes belong to the Yankees...

The final verse of the poem (1974:108-9) – clearly shaped by a youthful idealism – elucidates its vision of revolution and reconstruction. In this connection, the dedication to Che Guevara, killed in 1967, two years before the date of the poem, is a reminder of the resonance of the Cuban Revolution among young French Caribbean intellectuals of the time:

Redites-moi le soleil de mémoire du Che,
 redites-moi les flots du devenir,
 redites-moi les chants de la nuit à l'aube...
 Et voici donc, mes frères, ma pierre nouvelle,
 mon offrande impatiente inouïe,
 voici mon bras, mon amour, ma colère,
 et voici de notre terre, l'intarissable devenir.

Tell me again of the sun of Che's memory,
 tell me of the floods of the future,
 tell me of the songs of night becoming dawn...
 And so, my brothers, here is my new stone,
 my impatient unheard-of offering,
 here my arm, my love, my wrath,
 And here the uncheckable future of our land.

What I find most interesting here is the ambiguity of "notre terre," in the final line. The poet has already, in verses previously cited, slipped into the skin of a Latin American persona, but the emphasis on the singular possessive in the penultimate line might indicate that he is now speaking in his own voice, making a personal declaration of allegiance rather than a token statement of solidarity with the Third World. Whether "notre terre" refers to "America" or to Martinique is perhaps an appropriate ambiguity in the work of a poet who consistently refuses the tyranny of "fences" – to return to Césaire's image of a "non-fence island." In fact the title of the collection from which this poem is taken, *L'Habit d'arlequin*, may be interpreted to mean that Melon-Degras sees his identity as essentially plural.

Superficially at least, the poetry of the Guadeloupean Sonny Rupaïre (1940-91) appears inextricably linked to his island of origin. Yet it rapidly becomes clear that his assumption of a national and regional identity is not without angst, that his sense of belonging is sometimes undermined by a historical "unbelonging." The title of the collection, to which I have already alluded, focuses on separation and fragmentation, and this theme is developed in the poem *De quelle amazone*. Rupaïre (1973:32) presents a somber vision of an island fragment, a "breast" detached from a continental body:

Je suis d'outre-mer:
 de la mer de désespérance
 où de Caracas à Guantánamo s'agitent
 sur les flots inlassablement
 les mains vertes d'une humanité naufragée.
 Je suis outre-mer:
 de Saint-Domingue à Trinidad
 parenthèse verte d'îles américaines
 si riches de leur dénuement
 et si pauvres dans leur richesse.
 Et je brave à pleins bras la violence des flots vers le soleil
 vers le soleil

vers le soleil.

I am from overseas:
 from the sea of desperation
 where from Caracas to Guantánamo wave
 tirelessly on the waters
 the green hands of a shipwrecked humanity.
 I am overseas:
 from Santo Domingo to Trinidad
 green parenthesis of American islands
 so rich in their destitution
 and so poor in their richness.
 And I brave the violence of the waves reaching out to the sun
 to the sun

to the sun.

The poet is, of course, interrogating the subjective notions of "center" and "periphery," recognizing that for a Guadeloupean, to say "Je suis d'outre-mer" is equivalent to participating in one's own marginalization.

This last verse of *Ultra-marine* suggests that the real "sea" that defines Caribbean identity is not the Atlantic Ocean implicitly referred to in the official formula, but the waters of the Caribbean, which both link and separate Guadeloupe and Jamaica. To refute the reinforcement of the balkanization of the colonial era, the poet privileges a shared Caribbean experience (in this he appears close to the Antillanité envisaged by Glissant). While the initial focus of the final stanza is on an experience of despair and futility – Rupaïre's "shipwrecked humanity" is reminiscent of Derek Walcott's "Castaway" – the paradoxes inherent in its imagery reflect a cautious optimism. His islands are strangely formidable, more substantial than the

"poussière d'Antilles" evoked in Melon-Degras' poem of painful self-deprecation. The "mains vertes" of these Caribbean "Antilles" promise survival and creativity, recalling the many luxuriant trees whose ability to withstand the seasonal onslaught of hurricane winds may seem as perplexing as the resilience of the region itself. A similar paradox is captured in the image of the "parenthèse verte d'îles américaines." Once again, the shape of the archipelago is suggestive, functioning here as a trope of the position in world politics of a region seen by some to be in the "backyard" of the United States (the ambiguity inherent in the adjective "américaines" is a source of irony). This image of marginalization translates a creeping disenchantment, particularly apparent when one compares this poem to *De quelle amazone*, written three years earlier (in 1964), in which a defiant archipelago aimed its arrow at an anonymous aggressor. Yet Rupaïre clearly believes in the creative possibilities implicit in the color green, in the "wealth" of a region materially disadvantaged, and that fundamental optimism is apparent in the final progression through the raging waters.

In conclusion, I cannot completely evade the question incorporated in my title, a question which was intended to reflect complex, overlapping affinities, rather than to suggest the possibility – or the desirability – of neat classification. In this analysis of the work of two poets who seem to embody "changing perspectives on identity" in French Caribbean poetry, I was keenly aware of the difficulties inherent in a rigid demarcation of ideological options. A cautionary remark by Gordon Rohlehr (1976:245) on "the inadequacy of an approach to Caribbean poetry which divides writers into irreconcilable schools or camps" is as applicable to francophone writers as to those from the English-speaking territories. One option or impulse clearly does not exclude the other(s), and Melon-Degras and Rupaïre both reflect in their work elements of Antillanité and Américanité, although the former term better translates the stronger "Pan-Caribbean" impulse which I sense in the poetry of Rupaïre. Perhaps the dynamism of Caribbean identity, and its literary expressions, is best illustrated by the fact that from 1968, Rupaïre chose to write exclusively in the vernacular, privileging and reclaiming his "créolité."

While the limits of this analysis have made it impossible to focus on a wide selection of texts, I think it is clear that the two writers have in common the refusal of the imperialism of a Eurocentric configuration of community. It is interesting to note that their work illustrates a tendency among French Caribbean writers of the "second generation" to self-consciously distance themselves from the canonical texts of Négritude in order to construct their own myths of identity: it is significant that neither Melon-Degras nor Rupaïre emphasizes the affinities of Afro-Caribbean peoples with the

ancestral continent. Yet, ironically, in their deconstruction of the assimilationist discourse of French colonialism, they emerge as heirs to a Césairean tradition of subversion of an essentially racist ideology.

NOTES

1. The original reads (Césaire 1983:46): Ce qui est à moi, ces quelques milliers de mortiférés qui tournent en rond dans la calebasse d'une île et ce qui est à moi aussi, l'archipel arqué comme le désir inquiet de se nier, on dirait une anxiété maternelle pour protéger la ténuité plus délicate qui sépare l'une de l'autre Amérique; et ses flancs qui secrètent pour l'Europe la bonne liqueur d'un Gulf Stream, et l'un des deux versants d'incandescence entre quoi l'Equateur funambule vers l'Afrique. Et mon île non-clôture, sa claire audace debout à l'arrière de cette polynésie, devant elle, la Guadeloupe fendue en deux de sa raie dorsale et de même misère que nous, Haïti où la négritude se mit debout pour la première fois et dit qu'elle croyait à son humanité et la comique petite queue de la Floride où d'un nègre s'achève la strangulation, et l'Afrique gigantesquement chenillant jusqu'au pied hispanique de l'Europe, sa nudité où la mort fauche à larges andains.

2. See for example his treatment of the topic in *Le discours antillais*.

3. In *Bonjour et adieu à la négritude* (1980:87), the Haitian René Depestre elaborates a concept of "Américanité" based on what he describes as "un processus universel de créolisation américaine"; the writer seems to identify particularly with a community extending from the South of the United States to the North of Brazil (1980:84).

4. A striking example is the official repression of the Pointe-à-Pitre demonstrations of 1967, resulting in some thirty civilian deaths.

5. This and all subsequent translations are my own.

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THE SWEET AND THE BITTER: CUBAN AND PUERTO RICAN
RESPONSES TO THE MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY SUGAR
CHALLENGE

Despite the enormous potential for regional and comparative approaches to the history of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, few students of the Hispanic Caribbean have produced works that transcend the traditional island-by-island approach. Studies put forth in the 1980s by Laird W. Bergad, Andrés Ramos Mattei, Roberto Marte, and the editors of *Between Slavery and Free Labor*, however, have begun to point in the direction of comparative possibilities and a less fractionalized view of the region.¹ This article attempts to contribute to the still very modest body of historiography that seeks to integrate more than one of the components of the Hispanic Caribbean. It focuses on one particular aspect of the region's history: the mid-nineteenth-century world market sugar pressures, and how Cuba and Puerto Rico responded to them.

The 1840s and 1850s were a period in which international market exigencies put enormous pressures on the economies of Cuba and Puerto Rico, in fact, on those of all sugar-exporting regions. Sugar consumption increased tremendously in countries like Great Britain and the United States as new, lower tariffs for the sweetener were put in place. As Sidney W. Mintz (1985:148) aptly put it: "A rarity in 1650, a luxury in 1750, sugar had been transformed into a virtual necessity by 1850." Increased demand for sugar – an apparently favorable development for sugar producers – was, however, only half the story. The supply of cane sugar from a variety of regions and beet sugar from Western and Central Europe also increased exponentially during this period with world beet sugar production jumping from 60,857 metric tons in 1845 to 351,602 metric tons in 1860 (Moreno

Fraginals 1978, III:36).² Sugar prices, thus, fell or at best remained stagnant during the 1840-1856 period, shrinking the profit margins of sugar producers around the world.³ Under such pressing circumstances, sugar planters in the Caribbean had to adjust to the new exigencies of the world market; planters in Cuba and Puerto Rico responded differently to these pressures, a reflection of divergent levels of capital resources and adaptability.

THE CUBAN RESPONSE

Cuban planters as a whole responded to the new realities of the world market by accepting the sugar challenge: in light of diminishing profit rates they sought to expand sugar production. During this critical time, Cuba's economy continued to steer away from diversification and relative self-sufficiency toward sugar monoculture and dependency. By 1855, sugar and its by-products represented 84 percent of Cuba's exports, and by 1862 this category represented 58 percent of the island's entire agricultural production (García de Arboleya 1859:238, Marrero 1984, X:101). Other traditional staples like coffee, tobacco, and cotton suffered serious setbacks as land, labor, and capital previously linked to these crops were siphoned off to the insatiable world of sugar. The number of coffee farms in Cuba, for example, fell from 2,067 in 1827 to 1,670 in 1846, and to 782 in 1862, a 62 percent drop in thirty-five years (Schroeder 1982:239).⁴ By the late 1870s, there remained less than 200 coffee estates in the entire island. In contrast, the number of sugar estates grew considerably during the same period from 1,000 in 1827 to 1,422 in 1846, to 1,650 in 1850. During the 1850s, the number of sugar estates actually declined somewhat to 1,365, a reduction, however, that indicated concentration rather than contraction.⁵ Not only did the Cuban economy accept foreign dictates to produce more sugar, but also specific kinds of sugar. The core nations with refining sectors to protect, the United States and Britain, shut off their markets for Cuban semi-refined sugar and called upon Cuba to produce more, of a lesser quality and for a smaller number of markets.

By the end of the 1850s, Cuba was a full-fledged sugar island. Seventy percent of the island's agricultural production consisted of sugar, close to 50 percent of all its slaves worked in sugar plantations, and more than 25 percent of its cultivated land was destined to sugar cane (Knight 1970:40-41). These transformations were apparent to contemporary observers. "There are no manufactures of any consequence" wrote Richard H. Dana (1859:129), "the mineral exports are not great; and, in fact, sugar is the one

staple. All Cuba has but one neck – the worst wish of the tyrant.” A year later, Ramón de la Sagra (1963) warned against the island’s dependence on a single export crop and coined the phrase “*agricultura de rapiña*” (preying agriculture). The problem of monoculture was aggravated by the fact that sugar went primarily to one market: the United States.

To stay competitive and to meet the quantitative and qualitative international demands, Cuba’s planter class embarked on expansion resting on two simultaneous, although seemingly contradictory, strategies: the mechanization of the sugar industry and the expansion of the servile labor force. New machines had always been a symbol of status among Cuban planters. Their mouthpiece of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Francisco de Arango y Parreño, had emphasized the necessity of integrating Europe’s latest technology into the island’s *ingenios*. Steam-powered engines made their debut in Cuba as early as 1796 and the island’s first railroad system was in place by 1837, more than a decade before it would appear in Cuba’s *de jure* metropolis.

The mechanization of Cuba’s sugar industry in the 1840s and 1850s did not, however, touch upon all aspects of sugar production and transportation. Despite some efforts to introduce steam-powered plows, planting and harvesting remained in their primitive forms as labor-intensive, manual tasks. New technology, however, transformed dramatically most of the manufacturing stages of sugar production. Steam engines to power larger and more sophisticated cane grinders became common in the 1840s and 1850s. Whereas in 1827 only 2.5 percent of the island’s sugar mills were run by steam engines, in 1860 close to 70 percent of the island’s sugar mills used this type of energy. Some estimates put this proportion near 91 percent by the end of the 1850s.⁶ This transition from muscular and hydraulic power to steam increased the grinding capacity and speed of the average *ingenio* enormously.

The next major step in sugar production, the crystallization of the *guarapo* (cane juice), also required improved mechanization in order to keep pace with the greater and faster outputs of the grinding phase. In this area the major technological innovation was the vacuum pan, known in the region as *tacho al vacío* or *tren Derosne*. In 1844, Wenceslao de Villaurrutia introduced one such device in his *ingenio*, replacing the open pans system (*trenes jamaíquinos*) in which boiling cane juice had to be manually transported through a succession of pans of different sizes (Marrero 1984:250). Because of their exorbitant price tags, however, Derosne and similar crystallizing devices were much slower in their penetration of Cuban sugar-making. Only the largest and most financially sound – or the most daring – of the *ingenios* managed to acquire vacuum pans in this period. By 1863,

only 4 percent of Cuba's *ingenios* had them. Four years later, a total of seventy-five *tachos al vacío* were operating at a staggering average cost of \$120,000 (Ely 1963:539).⁷ The rest of the planters had no option but to multiply the number of open *trenes* in order to keep up with the increased grinding capacity achieved with steam.

The following step, the *purga* or separation of sugar crystals and molasses, was the next phase in the mechanization orgy of the mid-century. Bottlenecks now occurred in this slow and simple procedure. Traditionally, the *purga* was achieved through a long process of filtration (lasting thirty to fifty days), which consisted of pouring the saturated molasses into conical containers with a cloth-covered hole on the bottom. By force of gravity most of the molasses covering the crystals dripped out into special containers, leaving behind sugar crystals of various degrees of purity. This stage was revolutionized by yet another innovation of the industrial age: the centrifuge – a spinning device with a metallic screen which pushed the excess molasses out of its inner drum, leaving the dried sugar crystals in the inner chamber. Cuba's pioneer in the use of the centrifuge was Joaquín de Ayestarán in his *ingenio* La Amistad in 1850 (Marrero 1984:194-95). These devices were popularized to such an extent that 116 of them were purchased in 1862 alone (Marte 1988:296).

Students of Cuban agrarian and social history have underscored the importance of yet another aspect of the industry's mechanization: railroads. According to Manuel Moreno Fraginals (1978, I:272) the establishment of the Güines railroad in 1837 marked "a fundamental mile-stone" in the rapid expansion of sugar in the 1840s and 1850s. In the same vein, Franklin Knight (1970:38) concludes that railroads were instrumental in freeing sugar production from earlier constraints that limited the extension of single *ingenios*. Knight stresses that the introduction of locomotives reduced transportation expenses and liberated a considerable segment of the plantation labor force, which could now be transferred to the production stages. Indicative of the railroad's importance is the use of 1837 as a periodization watershed by Laird W. Bergad (1990:109-14) in his recent book on Matanzas. Twenty-two years after the Güines locomotive puffed its first clouds of smoke, the Cuban railroad network consisted of 378 completed miles and 184 more miles under construction (García de Arboleya 1859:200-1). By 1865 the railroad network stretched along 754 operating miles.⁸

The mechanization of the Cuban sugar industry was not as simple as choosing models from the catalogues of the West Point Foundry or Derosne and Cail. It required enormous amounts of money which planters often did not have. Since the addition of new machines had to be coordinated with the acreage, the number of slaves, and the rest of the machines in the complex,

one addition in any particular phase usually translated into the necessity of further investments in more machines, land, and slaves. To set up a mid-size sugar plantation in the 1850s required an original investment of between \$300,000 and \$350,000 with yearly injections of \$40,000 for upkeep and renovation of the slave force (Ely 1963:446-47; Knight 1970:69). Because of the costs involved only a small segment of the old Cuban planter class managed to reorganize and expand their sugar operations to meet the challenges of the mid-century. Between 1838 and 1851, Francisco Pedroso y Herrera, Nicolás Peñalvar y Cárdenas, Ignacio Peñalvar y Angulo, Gonzalo de Herrera, Nicolás Martínez de Campos, and José Luis Alfonso and his brother José Eusebio Alfonso either set up new mechanized *ingenios* or reorganized the ones they had (García de Arboleya 1859:137-38; Knight 1970:39). Many others could not produce the cash or credit required to buy the expensive machinery and continued to struggle along with what they had for as long as they could. Between 1850 and 1860, 385 *ingenios* ceased operations, a 23 percent decrease.⁹ According to Moreno Fragonals (1978, I:222), the incapacity to purchase vacuum pans ruined the old planter class. One could also argue that it was precisely the disorderly, yet seemingly unavoidable, purchase of sugar-producing equipment that paved the road to their eventual ruin. Meanwhile, new capital from licit and illicit commercial enterprises moved in to accept the sugar challenge and establish fully mechanized sugar operations. The Aldamas, the Diagos, and Julián Zulueta were salient members of the new planter class composed mostly of first and second-generation immigrants.

Another goal of most planters wishing to mechanize was to reduce the industry's dependence on imported slave labor. The growing number of slaves and their majority status, first revealed by the census of 1841, were a constant source of anxiety among the propertied classes, which feared a St. Domingue-style racial war. Moreover, international pressures for the cessation of the slave trade sent clear signals to the Cuban plantocracy that they better start looking for alternative sources of labor. In 1854, Cristóbal Madan estimated that the application of the latest technology could reduce labor demands by seventy-nine men in a medium-sized, 4,000 hogshead *ingenio* (Hacendado 1854:32). He continued to state that it was not possible,

to enumerate the changes fostered by the exclusion of ignorant and barbaric hands, substituting them by a higher intelligence, one manifested in machines and inventions as well as direction and rational structuring of the work process.

Since the mechanization of the sugar industry failed to touch the planting and harvesting of sugar cane, the process did not alleviate labor needs; on the contrary, it increased them. The voracious appetite of the new mills had

to be satisfied, thus requiring the expansion of the cultivated area and the addition of new planting and cutting hands to allow the costly new machines to operate at full capacity. Alternative sources to bonded labor, however, were not easily forthcoming. Immigrants from the Peninsula and the Canary Islands tended to avoid plantation labor, and by the 1850s the island's planter class gave up hopes of promoting white colonization after innumerable failures and frustrations during the previous decade. Attempts were also made to reduce the dependence on black slavery by introducing coolie laborers from the Orient. During the second half of the 1850s, some 37,000 Chinese coolies arrived in Cuba as contract laborers.¹⁰ An anonymous member of the Creole elite dramatized the labor crisis when he stated in *La Gaceta de la Habana* that he would welcome not only Asian laborers, but even "orangutans if these were susceptible to domestication."¹¹ Thus, a paradox arose whereby, on the one hand, the planter class was stepping into the future, embracing the latest technology in sugar manufacturing, while on the other, it remained deeply attached to slavery and other forms of servile labor.

The relationship between mechanization and slave labor has long been a central issue of Cuban historiography. In the late 1940s, Raúl Cepero Bonilla (1948) put forth the thesis that the continuation of slavery was incompatible with the modernization of Cuba's sugar industry. He argued, rather dogmatically, that the enormous cost of slavery hindered the accumulation of capital necessary for successful mechanization and that slaves were not capable of operating the new complex machinery. Other Cuban historians have built upon Cepero Bonilla's interpretation, most notably Moreno Fragonals (1978, I:27, 49) and Fe Iglesias García (1985:59). Iglesias García recently asserted that slavery was a barrier to industrialization, and estimated that slaves represented between 38 and 40 percent of a mill's investments. Herbert S. Klein (1973:307-15) challenged the "incompatibility" thesis in the early 1970s. He pointed out that sugar producers in Louisiana had successfully modernized their industry *before* the abolition of slavery. More recently, Rebecca J. Scott (1985:89) concluded that "during the 1860s and 1870s, when the 'contradictions' within Cuban slavery were in theory becoming most apparent, the major sugar areas were nonetheless holding on to most of their slaves..." According to Scott, it was precisely in the most advanced and mechanized sugar regions where slavery persisted. More recent studies by Bergad (1989, 1990) emphasize both the viability and profitability of slavery well into the late 1860s. Actually, the Cuban planter class had no alternative but to mechanize and expand if it was to stay in business; this demanded more labor, and since alternative sources failed to provide it, the only reasonable response was to remain attached to slavery. Neither theoretical incompatibilities, which do not affect the course of

history, nor slave resistance, which is sometimes romanticized, brought about the institution's eventual demise.

During the 1850s, following four years of sharply reduced slave importation after the conspiracy of La Escalera, slave trading boomed once again (Eltis 1987:109-38). Increased demand and the slave population's inability to reproduce itself spurred the growth of the slave trade. According to estimates reported by the British judges of the Havana Mixed Commission, a total of 67,422 slaves were imported between 1849 and 1858. In October 6, 1855, British Consul Joseph Crawford reported: "This Island seems to be beset with slavers; they are swarming and what is worse, they appear to succeed in landing their Slaves eluding the vigilance of the Spanish authorities always." The high watermark of slave importation was reached in 1859-1861, when the Mixed Commission registered 58,705 importations and ninety-four enslaving expeditions (Murray 1980:244, 259).

Growing demand for labor during this period and the increasing legal difficulty faced by slave traders translated into higher slave prices. The average price for a *bozal* (African-born) jumped from between \$300 and \$350 in 1845 to between \$1,000 and \$1,500 in 1860.¹² Another indicator of Cuba's desperate demand for labor were recurrent attempts to siphon slaves from Puerto Rico and Brazil.¹³ According to the late Arturo Morales Carrión (1978: 200-3), a student of Puerto Rico's slave trade, the 1850 epidemic in Cuba with a toll of 30,000 slaves, spurred the flow of slaves from Puerto Rico to Cuba. Speculators were accused of buying up entire estates in Puerto Rico just to gain control over their bonded labor force for export to Cuba. This practice continued even after authorities in Puerto Rico established a \$75 export tax (per slave) in 1853. Harsher labor conditions in Cuba made the threat of being sold there, one of the most effective disciplinary measures that a planter in Puerto Rico could use against his slaves. In fact, Cuba was to the Puerto Rican slave what Mississippi and Alabama were to slaves in the Middle Atlantic region of the United States: hell.¹⁴ In March 1854, Captain-General Fernando de Norzagaray effectively put a stop to this flow of slaves out of Puerto Rico. In his decree's preamble he alluded to constant complaints by Puerto Rico's planter class. Cuba also imported slaves from Brazil, most probably from that country's depressed sugar regions of the Northeast (Díaz Soler 1967:407-8).

If planters' labor needs were the main stimulus behind slave trading, bribes and traders' profits insured the continuation of the trade. Captain-General Leopoldo O'Donnell was said to have left Cuba in 1848 with a fortune of over half a million dollars derived from slave importation bribes (*La Verdad* 1851:4). His successor, Federico Roncali, true to O'Donnell's precedent, charged a bribe of fifty-one pesos per imported slave (Ely 1963:585).

In an 1853 dispatch British Consul Joseph Crawford reported on the extent of official corruption regarding the slave trade.

[T]he Spanish Officers are bribed; the Slave Traders interested commit their offences and repeat them with the most complete impunity; Commissions sent by the Chief Authority of the Island to investigate such offences are baffled, or corrupted, the Masters and Crews are not punished, the Vessels are allowed to escape...¹⁵

In one instance the smugglers of 468 *bozales* to the Southern coast of Cuba had to pay bribes amounting to 468 gold ounces to the port's commanding officer, 234 gold ounces to the captain of the port, and 200 gold ounces, each, to the port's collector and tide-surveyor, a total of 1,102 gold ounces. Rumors circulated that Captain-General José de la Concha received one gold ounce (\$17) for each slave landing on Cuban shores and that in 1859 alone these fees earned him \$680,000.¹⁶ Despite this high rate of "taxation," slave trading brought enormous profits for traders bringing slaves into Cuba. According to an 1860 report by the British consul, slavers could afford to lose four vessels to every successful expedition and still make a profit (Murray 1980:266). In an 1861 report to Judge Truman Smith of the New York Mixed Commission, Robert W. Schufeldt estimated that a five-hundred-slave expedition could net \$236,500. He calculated costs to be \$37,500 for the slaves, \$7,000 for the ship, \$19,000 for wages, and \$100,000 (the largest single category) for bribes. Later estimates stated that slaves costing only \$40 worth of cheap liquor and rusty rifles in Africa could be sold in Cuba for \$600 and more. According to Hiram Fuller of the *New York Mirror*, an individual investor could buy \$500 worth of stock in a slave trading company and expect to return \$10,000 in a year or two.¹⁷

The mechanization and slave trading orgy of the 1840s and 1850s provided a means for social mobility that eventually led to the subordination of one elite by another. New machines and fresh slaves came at no small cost to Cuban planters. As a class, they soon found themselves indebted to the Spanish-born merchants who grew wealthy from speculation in slaves, capital, dry goods, and machines deemed necessary for the expansion of the sugar industry.

The Cuban sugar boom of the late 1700s and early 1800s stands as the deviant case of the Caribbean; it was the only such experience fueled by domestic capital and *native* skill. On this matter Knight (1977:249) has written:

The sugar revolution derived its greatest impetus from the entrepreneurial skills of the oldest families in Cuba. These families, having become rich in land and having access to public offices, found themselves strategically positioned to take every advantage of the early economic development.

Among the most salient names of these old families stood those of Arango, Montalvo, Duarte, Peñalvar, Cárdenas, Herrera, Chacón, O'Reilly, Calvo de la Puerta, O'Farrill, Pedroso, and Nuñez del Castillo.¹⁸ The sugar operations of these and other planters consisted of patriarchal, self-sufficient units, requiring little financing and only a primitive technology. According to Moreno Fragnals (1978, 1:63) the magical numbers of these units were one hundred slaves, producing 115 tons of sugar. Growth beyond that was achieved simply by establishing additional *ingenios*.

Evidence suggests that by the late 1830s, the majority of Cuba's sugar planters lacked the capital needed to expand and reorganize their enterprises. "[T]here are many known cases," wrote one observer, "who while having estates worth 200 or 300,000 pesos, can not dispose of 2,000 without needing them" (Zaragoza 1837:24). Thus, for many Cuban planters willing to accept the expansion challenge, mechanization meant recourse to outside sources of credit. In a society where, with few exceptions, there were no real banks until the 1850s, merchants played the role of money-lenders by advancing cash and imported goods in exchange for the guarantee of the planters' next harvest. The recourse to this mechanism, known as *refacción*, represented the subordination of the planters' interests to those of the mercantile class and eventually the takeover of landed wealth by the latter. Interests stipulated in *refacción* contracts ranged between 18 and 20 percent, a virtually confiscatory rate if compared to the going rate for credit in Europe, 4 to 5 percent (Ely 1963:324-25). Aside from profits derived from interests, merchants were able to extract profits by forcing planters to buy overpriced hogsheads, by charging excessive sales commissions and storage fees, and by speculating with the sugar that they bought at an agreed price before the harvest (Bergad 1990:174).

Many contemporary observers and more recent students of the region's history have blamed these high rates of interest on a specific piece of sixteenth-century Spanish colonial legislation: *el privilegio de ingenios* (privilege of the sugar estates). This law protected sugar producers from having their land, slaves, and equipment seized for debt. Francisco de Arango y Parreño was among the first Cubans to blame the ills of the island's sugar culture on the maligned *privilegio*. In a May 24, 1797 deposition to the Development Board, Arango y Parreño called for its abolition. He argued that the *privilegio* kept good land in bad hands and that it favored not only those suffering misfortune but also the "treacherous swindlers" (Marrero 1984:210). Another critic implied that such laws favored the debtors as he recounted the anecdote of a merchant who was sentenced to forty years in prison for attempting to collect from a delinquent marquis (De Roches 1869:15-17). In the middle of the nineteenth century, colonial administra-

tors in Cuba and Puerto Rico stepped in to remedy some of the problems of the sugar industry by attacking the centuries old *privilegio*. On November 10, 1848, Captain-General Juan de la Pezuela promulgated a decree granting sugar planters in Puerto Rico the dubious right to renounce the *privilegio*. Four years later, a royal decree provided that *ingenios* established hence would no longer enjoy the *privilegio*, and that all others would lose it by 1865.¹⁹ Although no actual documentation supports this contention, it is likely that in light of their pressing needs for credit, planters were willing to forfeit their *privilegio* as a precondition for credit.²⁰

In summation, by accepting the expansion challenge, Cuban planters prepared the scenario for their downfall. Having little capital to finance their industry's modernization, the most daring resorted to expensive sources of credit. Others simply backed away from expansion. By the end of the 1850s the planter class had lost financial control over the sugar industry. With the *privilegio* gone or about to expire, the actual loss of its property became a matter of time. The economic and financial crisis of 1857 further aided this process. In that year alone 250 bankruptcies were registered in Havana (Pérez 1988:113). Francisco López Segrera (1979:114) has concluded in his study of the Cuban economy that by 1860 Spanish commercial capital had gained almost complete control of the sugar business. According to Moreno Fragnals (1985:16), two-thirds of the Cuban sugar industry were mortgaged, and consequently in the hands of the mostly foreign merchant class by 1863. At that point 95 percent of the *ingenios* were mortgaged to some degree.

The mechanization of the Cuban sugar industry and the consequent rise of slave importations, the two processes that sealed the fatal destiny of Cuban planters, were precisely the circumstances favoring the ascendancy of Spanish commercial capital. During the 1840s and the 1850s, the Peninsular element gradually moved into territory heretofore monopolized by the Creole elite. Spaniards seeking a fortune in Cuba usually found it in one or more of three ways: first, government service through high salaries and access to even higher bribes²¹; second, usury and speculative trading-lending; and finally, contraband, particularly in slaves.

Spaniards migrating to Cuba usually carved their niches in either the colonial bureaucracy, Church, military, or commercial sector. Only on rare occasions would Spanish immigrants engage directly in agricultural ventures of their own; Julián Zulueta being a notable exception to this. Zulueta, a poor and illiterate Basque immigrant, started out as a *dependiente* (shop clerk) gradually moving up to become an independent merchant, and later (1844) a plantation owner as well. By 1857, Zulueta, who was active in slave trading, was Havana's largest slave-owner, with 1,475 slaves.²² "I have not

seen during the time I have been in this Island," wrote a visiting traveler, "a single Spaniard cultivating the soil."²³ Most Spaniards started out as *dependientes* in commercial establishments, perhaps working for a so-called *tío* (distant relative, called uncle) or a *paisano* (fellow-countryman). Through thrift, cunning, or deceit, or a combination of all three, some *dependientes* managed to amass small fortunes which eventually allowed them to set up their own commercial enterprises.

Comprised mostly of Peninsulars, the commercial sector exploited and subordinated the planter class through a multitude of mechanisms. First, it advanced overpriced goods and cash at the exorbitant rate of 18 to 20 percent. Second, it set the price at which sugar was received as payment. Third, it collected fees, commissions and other charges for transporting, storing, and selling the sugar. As if this was not enough, some merchants refused to accept sugar not packed in the containers that they sold. Their hogsheads and barrels were, thus, forced upon indebted planters at prices far above their market value. An extreme practice by some merchants consisted of collecting the molasses that dripped from sugar hogsheads during their storage. These dripping molasses were not credited to the planters at the time of shipping, rather they were retained by greedy merchants as an additional source of profit. For them, it was obvious, every drop counted (Ely 1963:306-7; 1964:470-72).

Rather than wait for the drops of molasses to accumulate slowly, some merchants opted for quicker ways to make their fortunes. None was quicker than trading in slaves. Roland T. Ely (1963:330-31), a student of Cuba's commercial sector in the nineteenth century, concluded that a great many of the island's commercial fortunes were made by importing and selling slaves. Another student of Cuban society in the nineteenth century, Robert L. Paquette (1988:46-47), asserts that slave trading was one of two ways in which newcomers became members of the elite – marrying into it being the other. The previously mentioned Julián Zulueta was one of the *nouveaux riches* and to cite just another example, José Suárez Argudín arrived penniless from Asturias and within a few years became one of the island's wealthiest men, elected deputy to Madrid in 1867.²⁴ Interestingly, contrary to the trend during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries whereby the new Spanish immigrants soon became "Cubanized" through absorption into older Cuban clans, the newer waves now tended to retain their Spanish identity and acted and saw themselves as superior non-permanent residents of the island. Spanish cultural clubs, such as *el Casino Español*, and participation in the infamous Volunteer Corps increasingly served to reinforce this sense of separateness during the later decades of the nineteenth century. The origins of this divide can, perhaps, be found in the anti-Creole policies

of Captain-General Miguel Tacón and in the mid-century ideological split over the issue of the slave trade. This issue clearly drew the line separating the mostly Creole planter segment, opposed to the continuation of the slave trade, and the mostly foreign commercial sector, intimately linked to slave trading activities.

Finally, simultaneously with the process of economic subordination outlined above, the colonial state through banishment and confiscation aided in the displacement of the Cuban elite; the *coup de grace* would come with the Ten Years' War (1868-78).²⁵

PUERTO RICO'S RESPONSE

Puerto Rico responded quite differently to mid-nineteenth-century world market demands for tropical staples. Whereas Cuban planters attempted to remain competitive by increasing output through expansion and mechanization, in Puerto Rico planters fell victim to a sustained crisis marked by stagnation and decline. Between 1850 and 1859, Puerto Rico's sugar exports declined at an average yearly change rate of 26,317 *quintales*; the decade started with exports of 1,121,294 quintals and ended with exports of 884,443 *quintales*.²⁶ In the light of the crisis some of the capital backing sugar production was diverted to other agricultural ventures or commerce or simply faded away in the face of a prolonged crisis that reached its nadir in the 1870s.

A series of basic differences separated Cuba and Puerto Rico in terms of their economic history and their capacity to meet the challenges of the mid-century. Above all, Puerto Rico's sugar boom, which started some fifty years later than Cuba's, was fueled, financed, and managed by foreign capital and immigrant entrepreneurs. Interestingly, while the origins of the Cuban sugar revolution are usually traced back to the British occupation of Havana 1762-63 (an eleven-month period during which the port city received an influx of ten thousand slaves), the boom in Puerto Rico is attributed to the measures of the 1815 *Cédula de Gracias*, which, among other things, promoted the immigration of foreign capitalists. In short, while Cuba imported its labor force, Puerto Rico began by importing its bourgeoisie.

A prosopographic analysis of Ponce's planter class by Francisco A. Scarrano (1981) has demonstrated that only 28 to 30 percent of the municipality's sugar planters were Puerto Rican (1827-45). As he points out, even these percentages do not give a full picture because the estates owned by Creoles were among the smallest of the holdings.

By the middle of the century, the privileged strata of Ponce's society were primarily composed of first or second generation immigrant families, while only a minority of the sugar estate owners could trace their origins to the old elite of *hateros* and *estancieros*, the patriarchal rural elite of the eighteenth century. (Scarano 1981:23)

One of the drawbacks of having a foreign-born bourgeoisie leading Puerto Rico's transition to an export economy was that the capital behind the process was uncommitted and highly mobile. French, Spanish, or German planters in Puerto Rico could easily sell their land, slaves, and equipment and retire back to Europe if pressed too hard, or they could shift their capital resources into commerce, where most of the plantation capital had originated. In contrast, the Cuban planter class had an additional incentive to face the sugar challenge. For them, holding on to their land meant keeping an ancestral symbol of status and prestige; their lands, many times linked to titles of nobility, had passed from generation to generation, deemed the most important legacy they could hand to their heirs. Besides, Cuban sugar estates were larger and could resist times of crisis better than their smaller counterparts in Puerto Rico.²⁷

If Cuba's sugar boom was a revolution, Puerto Rico's was a revolt. Puerto Rican expansion was shorter (through the 1820s and 1830s), localized, and not as far reaching. As pointed out earlier, during the 1840s the island's sugar industry began to show signs of debilitation. The number of sugar estates dropped by two-thirds from 1,552 in 1830 to 550 in 1860, while sugar output remained stagnant (Ramos Mattei 1981:126; Bergad 1983:68). Puerto Rico's newer planters did not exhibit the same staying power as their Cuban colleagues. Moreover, mechanization in Puerto Rico lagged decades behind, which meant that modernization to competitive levels required larger sums of money. For example, as late as 1867 vacuum pans had not been adopted in Puerto Rico; that year there were seventy-five such units operating in Cuba. Three years later, only 120, or 20 percent of the island's sugar estates used steam to run their mills.²⁸ Significantly, while Cuban planters were downgrading their sugar production to meet the quality standards of the United States market, Puerto Rico's sugar, with a high content of molasses, was not deemed appropriate for the needs of the United States and other North Atlantic markets. Moreover, Puerto Rico was geographically farther than Cuba from the United States, which made Puerto Rico's sugar less competitive when transportation expenses were added to the costs. Finally, chronic droughts and declining soil fertility affected the southern coast of Puerto Rico beginning in the 1840s.

Another significant contrast between Puerto Rico and Cuba was that large proportions of the arable land and labor force in the smaller island remained on the fringes of the plantation economy. Sugar plantations had

sprung up only in select pockets of Puerto Rico like Ponce, Guayama, and Mayagüez, while most of the work force and tillable land remained allocated to minor crops and subsistence agriculture. In fact, it could be argued that Puerto Rico was not a plantation society. In the same sense, Cuba's Eastern Department was not a plantation society although it harbored pockets of plantations in Santiago and Guantánamo. According to 1862 estimates, the amount of land for minor crops (i.e., plantains, tubers, and corn) in Puerto Rico was about equivalent to that destined to the island's chief staples: sugar and coffee (Scarano 1984:5). Moreover, Puerto Rico had a massive population of independent or subordinate peasants who remained on the fringes of the plantation economy. In 1844, the British Consul at San Juan described this element of the island's population as follows:

[T]he natives who are free surpass by far the slaves, many of them possess small plots in which they live, and since their needs are minimal, they only cultivate that which they find necessary to sustain themselves, they care little about improving their crops or their condition... (quoted in Morales Carrión 1978:134-35)

The availability of land had made this kind of life-style possible for centuries. According to the historian Laird W. Bergad (1983), unoccupied lands were still plentiful in the first half of the nineteenth century, a circumstance that made labor-control difficult. The dual expansion of the state and staple agriculture, however, soon pushed this autonomous population into the frontier interior of the island.

During the late 1830s and the 1840s, efforts were made to regiment the island's independent work force through antivagrancy laws and other coercive means. In June 1838, Captain-General Miguel López de Baños passed his notorious "Bando contra la Vagancia" (vagrancy law). Antivagrancy tribunals, called "Juntas de Vagos y Amancebados," were set up to punish those who preferred to subsist off officially vacant plots rather than become servile peons in export-oriented units. The crown jewel of Puerto Rico's coercive labor legislation was Juan de la Pezuela's "Ley de la Libreta" of 1849. It stipulated that those without land or a profession either had to become tenants or had to search for employment under a landholder and carry with them their *libreta de jornalero* (journeyman's passbook) at all times. The *libretas* were used to make annotations about each *jornalero's* work, wages, debts, and conduct. *Jornaleros* were also forced to remain in one particular municipality and to continue working for the same estate until their debts were cleared. To further control the mobility of the labor force, land owners commonly advanced overpriced goods to their workers from their own estate shops. British Consul Augustus Cowper praised the

results of the *libreta*. "It has been in practice for fifteen years," he wrote in 1866, "and the results have been that every man, without distinction of color, has been forced to work; the productions of the soil have annually increased; and vagrancy, and the higher crimes are almost unknown."²⁹ The dual expansion of the state and the export economy eventually caught up with the people and the land of Puerto Rico's interior. As Fernando Picó (1979) has demonstrated in his studies of the Utuado municipality, the rolls of the *jornalero* class became filled with the names of descendants of the town's founding families and its former local elite.

Perhaps the sharpest contrasts to be drawn between Cuba and Puerto Rico in this period are those relating to slavery and racial patterns. In Puerto Rico slavery never played the crucial role it did in Cuba. According to Philip D. Curtin's estimates, a total of about 702,000 slaves arrived in Cuba, but only 77,000, close to a mere tenth of that, were imported into the smaller island. Moreover, in Cuba the slave population reached its peak in 1841, with 436,500 or 43 percent of the population; in Puerto Rico it peaked around 1846, with 51,300 or less than 12 percent of the population. Patterns of change in the importation of slaves into Cuba and Puerto Rico further reveal divergent developments since the crisis of the sugar industry in Puerto Rico had a considerable impact on the demand for slave labor. While an estimated 1,410 slaves entered Puerto Rico yearly between 1830 and 1845, during the following fifteen years only an average of 700 slaves arrived each year, a decrease upwards of 50 percent. In contrast, in Cuba, where the sugar industry continued to expand, yearly average imports of slaves increased from 10,014 during 1827-1847 to 10,546 during 1848-1860, a modest 5 percent increase (Curtin 1969:31-44, 88).

A series of factors explain the crisis of slavery in Puerto Rico. First, as suggested before, the island's economic reorientation away from sugar and toward coffee reduced the demand for slave labor. Second, those who continued to produce sugar were not always in the best position to invest in new slaves. Third, as demonstrated by the studies of José A. Curet (1982:84-85), the low technological level of most sugar estates meant that the addition of more slaves in estates with fifty or more slaves produced only marginal returns. These factors also help explain the loose attachment of planters in Puerto Rico to the continuation of the slave trade. In 1860, when slave imports were breaking records in Cuba, Consul Charles De Ronceray described the prevailing attitude in Puerto Rico in the following terms:

[T]he sentiments of the natives, including the planters are opposed to the transportation of slaves from Africa and very little encouragement is therefore given to the slave trade either by the people or Government of the island notwithstanding the want of labor.³⁰

The lesser importance of slavery was also reflected in Puerto Rico's racial patterns. The existence of large sectors of society outside the grip of the state and the export economy during three centuries favored the population's miscegenation. Enlightened European visitors to Puerto Rico noted a high degree of race mixture among the population, a characteristic attributed to activities lying outside the sphere of the state and the official economy: piracy, smuggling, illegal immigrations, desertion, and marronage (Morales Carrión 1978:11-14). Census data for San Juan's districts between 1823 and 1833 show that the proportion of free people of color in the different *barrios* ranged between 38 to 59 percent of the entire population (Kinsbruner 1990:445). By 1860, according to census figures, Puerto Rico's non-white free population was 241,015 out of a total of 583,308 inhabitants, that is 41 percent. According to one abolitionist active in Puerto Rican politics, "there is no radical separation of the races in this country, and mulattoes constitute more than 50 percent of the population" (De Labra 1871:25). Contrastingly, in Cuba, particularly in the western districts where plantations played such a central role, there was a far more defined separation of the races and a much stronger correlation between color and status. The Cuban census of 1841, for example, reflected a population consisting of 418,291 whites (41.5 percent), 490,305 blacks (48.7 percent), and 99,028 mulattoes (9.8 percent) (Knight 1970:86, 93). Regarding Matanzas, specifically, the 1862 census reflected that 40 percent of the population was white, 46 percent was black slave, and only 6 percent was either free or *emancipado* of color, while the remaining 896 was Asian (Bergad 1990:99). Racism, the ideology which sought to preserve this kind of stratification and a close association between color and status was also considerably stronger in Cuba than in Puerto Rico.

In summation, the world market demands put enormous pressures on the economies of the Spanish colonies of the Caribbean during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Sugar planters were forced either to accept the sugar challenge, by modernizing the industry and expanding slavery or to withdraw from the industry altogether. Despite belonging to the same geographical region, sharing similar climatic and geological conditions, and being subjected under the same empire, Cuba and Puerto Rico took different economic paths during the mid-nineteenth century. Conditions in Cuba were favorable to the acceptance of the sugar challenge. Planters there resorted to expensive credit in order to modernize and expand sugar production. The result of this was that by 1863 two-thirds of the industry were in the hands of Spanish merchant-bankers, who held mortgages to the amount of \$200,000,000. Meanwhile, in Puerto Rico the mostly foreign planter class had no choice but to continue operating at a reduced level or to back away

and diversify into other crops, coffee in particular. Both societies faced similar challenges from the outside world; both responded to them as best they could, but in the end both floundered, each in its own particular way.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Moreno Friginals, Moya Pons & Engerman (1985), Ramos Mattei (1987), Bergad (1988), Marte (1988), and Oostindie (1992). See also Martínez-Fernández (1990). This article is a revised version of Chapter Four of this dissertation. Research for the broader project from which this article stems was made possible by the generous support of the following institutions: Duke University; the Tinker Foundation; the Program in Atlantic History, Culture, and Society of The Johns Hopkins University; Bowdoin College; the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund; the American Historical Association; and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
2. The percentage of beet sugar among British sugar imports increased consistently during the second half of the nineteenth century, from 14% in 1853 to 23% in 1863, and further to 38% in 1873 (Williams 1984:383).
3. According to Mintz (1985:144), sugar prices fell by 30 percent between 1840 and 1850, and by a further 25 percent between 1851 and 1870. Bergad's (1990:162) figures show that in Mantanzas sugar prices remained fairly stable during 1840-56 and then shot up in 1857-58.
4. A series of ravishing hurricanes hit the Cuban coffee regions in the mid-1840s, causing enormous destruction.
5. A variety of sources provide data on the number of estates, among them: Wilson (1850:7), Corwin (1967:295), Knight (1970:39), and Marrero (1984:176).
6. For information on numbers and proportions of steam-run mills see Wilson (1850:7), Knight (1970:39), Denslow (1974:77), and Marrero (1984:176).
7. See also the testimony of José Julián Acosta in the *Junta de Información*, February 6, 1867 (España, Ministerio de Ultramar 1873:72).
8. For an assessment on the origins, development, and impact of the Cuban railroads, see Oostindie 1984 and 1988.
9. See Wilson (1850:7), Corwin (1967:295), Knight (1970:39), and Marrero (1984:176).
10. For data on coolie and Yucatecan labor imports, see Crawford to Lord Clarendon, August 7 and 16, 1855, Great Britain, Parliament, *British Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter cited as *BPP*), vol. 42, Class B: 397-401; see also Bergad (1990:250-1).
11. Ely (1963:616); "Report of Coolie Importations to Cuba, June 14, 1858," National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter cited as NAWDC), Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59, Despatches from U.S. Consuls in Havana, roll 39; *La Gaceta de La Habana*, January 30, 1856.
12. Commenting on the scarcity and expense of labor and referring to Chinese contract workers, Dana wrote in 1859: "such is the value of labor in Cuba, that a citizen will give \$400, in cash, for the chance of enforcing eight years' labor, at \$4 per month, from a man speaking a strange language, worshipping strange gods or none, thinking suicide a virtue..." See also Schroeder (1982:107); Knight (1970:181); Dana (1966:45).

13. According to an 1850 report by the British judge of the Havana Mixed Commission, three or four cargoes of Brazilian slaves arrived yearly to the island, *BPP*, vol. 7, 173-77.
14. Morales Carrión (1978:195, 203) recounts dramatic instances of slaves jumping off ships to avoid being sent to Cuba.
15. Crawford to Lord Clarendon, Aug. 29, 1853, quoted in Murray (1980:247-48).
16. U.S. Congress, "Stephen R. Mallory of Florida on the Acquisition of Cuba," 35th Congress, 2nd session, *Congressional Globe* (February 25, 1859) vol. 28, pt. 2, 1328; Gibbes (1860:39).
17. Schufeldt (1970:218-35); quotation of Hiram Fuller of the *New York Mirror*, in Marrero (1984:269); Corwin (1967:118). Similar estimates were produced by the British consul at Havana, who calculated that a 450-slave expedition could net a \$389,850 profit, and that twice as much was spent in bribes ("blood money") than in purchasing the slaves; Crawford to Lord Russell, February 5, 1861, Great Britain, Foreign Office, General Correspondence before 1906, Slave Trade (microfilm), vol. 5, Class B, 16-19.
18. Knight (1970:231-53); Paquette (1988:45). For a discussion of native wealth expanding to Matanzas, see Bergad (1990:14-15, 22-23).
19. *La Gaceta de Puerto Rico*, vol. 17, no. 137, quoted in Cruz Monclova (1952:292).
20. Between 1850 and 1853 planter Fernando Diago paid a total of \$333,815 in interest for his debts to *refaccionistas* while his colleague Joaquín de Ayestarán paid \$284,691 (Pérez 1988:94).
21. Cancio Villa-Amil (1875:44) lists a variety of popular sayings describing the extent of official corruption in Cuba: "To leave one's shame in Cádiz," "Nobody comes to Cuba for the fresh air," "To kill leaves" (to destroy incriminating government documents).
22. See Corwin (1967:136-37) and Marrero (1984:269-71). Bergad (1990:51-52) contends that Zulueta's humble origins were fictional. He, however, fails to present supporting evidence for this contention.
23. See Philalethes (1856:64-65). Similar information is provided in Dana (1966:111-12), Thrasher (1859:77), and Rawson (1847:12).
24. Marte (1988:178-79) mentions other examples such as Antonio Tellería, Ramón Herrera, and Rafael Toca.
25. By 1895, only 17% of the island's planter class could trace its origins to the "old plantation owning families" (Moreno Friginals 1985:5).
26. Data from *Balanzas mercantiles*, housed in the Centro de Investigaciones Históricas de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. The average yearly change rate is calculated by determining all the yearly fluctuations between 1850 and 1859, and then calculating the average.
27. Scarano (1984:66-67) writes that Cuban *ingenios* produced a mean of 391 tons (1860) while the Puerto Rican average remained at around 87 tons (1845).
28. Indicative of the stagnation of Puerto Rico's sugar industry is the fact that in 1899 one half of the sugar mills were still driven by oxen. The railroad too arrived in Puerto Rico some forty years later than in Cuba; Ramos Mattei (1981:22-23) and Bergad (1978:65-66).
29. H. Augustus Cowper to Lord Clarendon, February 11, 1866 (Centro de Investigaciones Históricas 1974:53).
30. De Ronceray to Cass, Aug. 22, 1860; NAWDC, Records of Foreign Service Posts, San Juan, Record Group 84, vol. 7228.

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LINTON KWESI JOHNSON: POETRY DOWN A REGGAE WIRE

Linton Kwesi Johnson had been writing seriously for about four years when his first published poem appeared in 1973. There had been nothing particularly propitious in his experience up to then to indicate that within a relatively short period of time he would become an internationally recognized writer and performer. Now, at forty years of age, he has published four books of poetry, has recorded seven collections of his poems set to music, and has appeared in public readings and performances of his work in at least twenty-one countries outside of England. He has also pursued a parallel career as a political activist and journalist.

Johnson was born in Chapelton in the parish of Clarendon on the island of Jamaica in August 1952. His parents had moved down from the mountains to try for a financially better life in the town. They moved to Kingston when Johnson was about seven years old, leaving him with his grandmother at Sandy River, at the foot of the Bull Head Mountains. He was moved from Chapelton All-Age School to Staceyville All-Age, near Sandy River. His mother soon left Kingston for England, and in 1963, at the age of eleven, Linton emigrated to join her on Acre Lane in Brixton, South London (Morris 1987:17).

The images of black and white Britain immediately impressed the young Johnson. On one hand, the Caribbean spirit of Brixton market, the sounds of his own Jamaican nation language, and the similar experiences of his young black schoolmates, also recent immigrants, provided something of a welcoming milieu. Simultaneously, he was jolted by the ugliness of the urban chimney-scapes, by the vision of white men sweeping the streets, and,

crucially, by the racism exuded by white students and teachers at the Tulse Hill Comprehensive School in London (Morris 1987:18).

Johnson could have become the type of rebel youth that he was later to write about with such insight – striking out against the most immediate and visible aspects of racial oppression, with little political consciousness beyond the unreflective expression of a diffuse rage, ultimately self-destructive. In his final year of secondary school, however, he was deflected from this course when he became aware of, and joined, the youth section of the Black Panther Party of England. Initially, the comradeship, discipline, and ideological training he acquired in the Panthers provided a political channeling of his energies which he perhaps could not have achieved on his own. More important for his mind and spirit was his discovery in the Panther library of a book which he has cited frequently as the catalyst for his awakening consciousness. W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) served to focus the inchoate thoughts and feelings that had been accumulating in him as a young colonial-born black in the British metropole. Soon after, his reading of Frantz Fanon did the same for his rage.

Through the shared knowledge provided by his comrades in the Panthers, and on his own initiative, he learned more of the black literary tradition to which his reading of Du Bois had awakened him. After Du Bois and Fanon, he familiarized himself with the writings of the black power movement in the United States.¹ More important for his own genesis as a writer was his discovery of a West Indian literary heritage. He was particularly excited by the protest tradition in West Indian writing, represented by the poems of Martin Carter of Guyana and George Campbell of Jamaica (Asien 1972). Grounded in the events of anti-colonial struggle in the Caribbean, Carter's and Campbell's poems prompted Johnson to see the possibilities of the genre in the context of the internal colonialism of Britain. He learned also of the poets emerging from the mid-twentieth century resurgence of African culture, and was impressed especially by the work of Tchicaya U Tam'si of the Congo and of Christopher Okigbo, the Ibo poet killed during the Nigerian civil war.

Johnson left Tulse Hill with five "O" levels, and studied for "A" levels at home while making a living as a civil servant, first as a clerk in the Treasury and then at the Greater London Council. He also married and started a family. Busy as he was, he nevertheless found time to read widely and to write. His writing in 1970-72 – poems and several prose-poetic pieces – was derivative and probative. The influence of the various writers he was reading can be detected in the manuscripts he produced, most of which remain unpublished.

Over the next several years, he experimented with diction, theme, and

style, searching for his own voice. He wrote mostly in standard English. In his prose pieces especially, the tone tended to be stilted and the vocabulary overwrought. His themes were introspective explorations of identity and blackness. Images of night and womb merged into a pervasive darkness juxtaposed with metaphors of oppressive light and whiteness.

Inspired by the luxuriant imaginations of Okigbo and U Tam'si, he experimented with a surrealism that appeared to follow Okigbo's rubric of the organic relationship of outer and inner worlds, of the phenomenal and the imaginative (Okigbo 1971:xi), or U Tam'si's structure of expanding patterns of imagery. He also found a resonance of his immigrant experience in one of U Tam'si's dominating themes, that of the tension between childhood memories of a colonial homeland and mundane daily experience in an alien capital (U Tam'si 1972:vii, xiii). U Tam'si lived in Paris for long periods of his adult life.

Johnson adopted the pattern of writing sequences of poems under a general theme and title, intended as organic wholes, and experimented with the call and response or crier and chorus structure that was employed by Okigbo, who had adapted the method from the ancient oral tradition of African verse and story telling. The call and response form would not have been exotic for Johnson, as it was also typical of Jamaican Rastafarian psalmody, and, indeed, of a long Afro-Jamaican tradition of worksongs and spirituals. Out of this energetic experimentation in the early 1970s came the title poem (and longest section) of Johnson's first book, *Voices of the Living and the Dead*, and the manuscript sequence, originally entitled "Notes on Brixton," that was the genesis of his second book, *Dread Beat and Blood*.

The poem *Voices of the Living and the Dead* was made public first as a dramatic presentation of the Keskidee Community Theatre Workshop, at the Keskidee Centre in London, in June 1973. The book of the same title, which also included two shorter poems, was published in London in 1974. In this long dramatic poem, the caller and chorus parts of African and West Indian tradition are divided in four distinct voices – Narrator, Dead, Living, and Echo. The outpouring of words in *Voices* constitutes a libation for the ancestors of black history and struggle –

A harvest of the bodies of all
who are dead, we who are alive will make. (Johnson 1974:23)

The poem is also a homage to the living elders of the literary tradition in which Johnson would soon take his place; its opening epigraph, significantly, are these lines from Martin Carter (Johnson 1974:1):

Now from the mourning vanguard,
 moving,
 dear Comrade,
 I salute you,
 and I say death will not find us thinking that we die.

Voices conveys, in a more disciplined form, some of the imagistic ebullience of Johnson's experimental writing up to then. It represents the end of that phase of his writing, however; its apocalyptic tone and surreal imagery would not be seen or heard again in his poems, except briefly and mutedly in the five poems constituting the "Time to Explode" section of *Dread Beat and Blood*. In *Voices* the Echo proclaims,

From extension of other voices
 We became voices of our own. (Johnson 1974:23)

Linton Kwesi Johnson was already finding his voice, but it was heard more in the final poem of the book *Voices* than in the title poem:

night number one was in BRIXTON:
 SOFRANO B sound system
 was a beating out a rhythm with a fire
 coming down his reggae reggae wire.

Those lines, from the poem *Five Nights of Bleeding*, represent the voice that would become most familiar to his worldwide audience.

The reggae that had been produced in Britain up to the early 1970s was a thin distillation of the heavy molasses of the music as it was being played and recorded on the island of Jamaica, where the hot musical form known as ska had simmered into rock steady, which then bubbled into reggae. The lyrics of the Wailers and other groups reported and protested the social conditions that produced the brutalizing poverty of the Kingston ghettos. Rastafari-inspired tunes such as Niney's "Blood and Fire" called down judgement on the Babylonian captivity that produced such conditions. Disc jockeys who carried their increasingly elaborate sound systems to yard parties and street dances added their improvisatory versifying to the dub tracks of popular tunes. Stripped down to the basics of percussion and bass guitar, with added electronic effects of echo and reverb, the dub form was developed by ranking disc jockeys such as Hugh Roy and Big Youth in the late 1960s and early 1970s into a new popular art form that Johnson was to call "dub poetry" (Morris 1987:22). West Indians in Britain were kept informed

of these musical developments in Jamaica by record imports, played by black Britain's own growing number of disc jockeys and sound systems, in clubs and at "blues dances." Johnson himself had his own sound system for a while. He listened to the music not only with a love for its island roots but also with an analytical appreciation that its lyrics and rhythmic changes signaled social, cultural, and political developments in Jamaican culture.

His own thinking about the music was supported by an important critical document from the West Indies that appeared in 1972. Gordon Rohlehr, in the department of English of the University of the West Indies at the St. Augustine campus in Trinidad, published a two part article in the Barbadian journal *Bim* in 1972. In that article, and in one called "Afterthoughts" in *Bim* in 1972, Rohlehr analyzed the social and cultural significance of the latest developments in Jamaican music in terms similar to those in which Johnson had been thinking.² Included in Rohlehr's discussion were the ska trombonist Don Drummond, the Rastafari group the Abyssinians, the sound system disc jockeys, and the rebel lyrics of Bob Marley. He linked them all (1972:134, 139) with the Rastafari attitude and concept of "dread" – "the impending doom and silence of the brooding locksman"; a "mythical sense of Apocalypse"; a "fierce energy, resolve and an underlying sense of the tragic"; the "historic tension between slaver and slave"; an "introspective menace."

Rohlehr's article was not mainly about musical developments, however. It was primarily a review, and a review of a review, of a watershed anthology of new writing, published in Jamaica in 1971 as a special issue of *Savacou*, the journal of the Caribbean Artists Movement. Edited by Edward Brathwaite, Kenneth Ramchand, and Andrew Salkey, the anthology contained the prose and poetry of some writers who had already established a critically accepted place for themselves in Caribbean literature, such as John Hearne, Derek Walcott, and Martin Carter. The editors chose, however, not only writing already accepted for its excellence, but "as broad a cross-section of what is actually being written, good or bad, so as to indicate as many trends as are current in the feeling, sensibility and creative effort of the period," as Rohlehr (1972:81) put it.

The shock of the new in this special issue of *Savacou* that resulted from this editorial decision had two effects. The first was a derisive critical response from those Caribbean writers who were seeking to establish their legitimacy in what they perceived as the tradition of a British or European esthetic. A major section of Rohlehr's article is a response to one negative review of the anthology by the poet Eric Roach in the *Trinidad Guardian* of July 14, 1971. The other effect was that of a literary liberation for young writers who had been stifled by the difficulties involved in seeking to

express Caribbean experiences and sensibilities in the standard English forms and the stilted or archaic diction which they had been taught in the schools as proper poetry. Several of the poets in the anthology broke the vessels of standard form, as it were, discarded the alien diction, and experimented with poetry consciously based in Caribbean imagery, language, and rhythms. The most dramatic examples of this breakthrough in *Savacou* were four poems by the Rastafari poet Bongo Jerry (Jerry Small), especially his *Mabrak*.

SILENCE BABEL TONGUES; recall and
recollect BLACK SPEECH.

Johnson read Rohlehr's article with great interest. It came to him not so much as a revelation but as a vindication of his own thinking on the social significance of Jamaican music and of the style of poetry he had already begun to write. Rohlehr's encouragement of the experiments of the younger writers strengthened Johnson's confidence in his own efforts. His reggae-based poetry would give an answer to Rohlehr's anticipation (1972:83):

I cannot but wonder what forms will grow from these roots [the sensibilities which produce reggae in Jamaica and kaiso in Trinidad], and welcome every sincere struggle to make abstracts of the language and rhythms which constitute the thews and sinews, the inner ground of our sensibility.

Johnson had also been reading the special edition of *Savacou* and the new poetry in the anthology had both encouraged him and confirmed his conviction that he was not writing in metropolitan isolation. His sense of belonging to a writing community had already been nourished by his association with some of the founding members of the Caribbean Artists Movement in London, especially the Panamanian/Jamaican writer Andrew Salkey and John LaRose, Trinidadian activist, writer, and publisher of New Beacon books in London (Walmsley 1992:317).

Johnson's first published poem was *Five Nights of Bleeding* in the journal *Race Today* (1973), which was later included in *Voices of the Living and the Dead* and in his second book, *Dread Beat and Blood*. It was written for Leroy Harris, a black youth stabbed at a party in South London. The poem was transitional. Its focus on the local, on the particulars of black life and struggle in London, would become typical of the poetry that his audience would read and hear in his books, performances, and recordings. And the rhythm is strongly that of the sound-system reggae that is the imaginative sound track for the events that occur in the poem's narrative, much in the way that the actual music would become an integral part of Johnson's per-

formances. Yet the carefully chosen diction in the poem and the straightforward syntax were those of standard English, and there was no attempt at the Jamaican orthography which, as Mervyn Morris (1990:22) has noted, became fairly consistent in Johnson's later work. *Five Nights* clearly exhibits what Johnson himself described as "the tension between Jamaican Creole and Jamaican English and between those and English English" (Johnson 1975:8), and in some lines of the poem the Creole strains to emerge:

SOFRANO B sound system
 was a beating out a rhythm with a fire
 coming down his reggae reggae wire...
 and the rebels them start a fighting
 the youth them just turn wild.

This linguistic tension posed a choice for Johnson, and in 1973, in addition to standard English, he began using a Creole phonemic system of his own devising. *Yout Scene*, the opening poem of his "Notes on Brixton" (unpublished) manuscript sequence, and his first to be written entirely in Creole, provides a clear example. A comparison of the first stanza of the poem in manuscript (in the left column) with the revised published version (right column) illustrates Johnson's concern to find a satisfactory rendering of the sound of the Creole:

Last Satdey	last satdey
he neva dey pon no form	I neva dey pan no faam,
so I decide fe tek a walk	so I decide fe tek a walk
dung a brixton	doun a Brixton,
an see wha' gwan.	an see wha gwane.

Of the six poems in "Notes on Brixton," four were completely Creole in syntax and orthography, anticipating the choice which Johnson made by 1974. From that year, almost all of his poetry is clearly and confidently Creole.

The tension in Johnson's craft was related to the tension in his daily life, a consequence, as he put it, "of having been brought up in a colonial society and then coming over here to live and go to school in England" (Johnson 1975:8). He responded to this tension with a political consciousness that was first nurtured in the Panthers. The literary ferment that grew among some of the young Panthers was not encouraged by the leadership, however, and Johnson needed more freedom to develop his talents (Dhondy 1979:67-68). He left the Panthers in 1973. Soon after, the leadership itself began to suc-

cumb to state harassment or co-optation, and the movement dissipated (Morris 1987:19).

The Panther experience proved salutary for Johnson nevertheless, steeling him for a realistic response to oppressive police activities in black communities such as Brixton. He was not simply an interested observer. He himself was brutalized by the police in an incident in the Brixton market in January 1973. Several plainclothes constables of the Special Patrol, invoking the notorious "sus" law – allowing conviction merely for loitering with intent to steal and arrest for being suspected of such – attempted to arrest two youths. Other youths intervened to prevent the arrest. Johnson, witnessing the confrontation, attempted to get the name and address of one of the apprehended youths, and the number of some uniformed officers who had arrived to support the plain clothes constables. Johnson was seized, told he was being arrested for assaulting a police officer, and was forced to lie prone in the police van, where he was kicked in the hip and the leg. Although he was cleared of the assault charge, the encounter gave Johnson a first hand experience of police methods that ensured that similar experiences depicted in his writings were not just vicariously imagined.

In 1973, having completed his "A" level examinations, he began reading for a degree in sociology at Goldsmith's College, University of London. His primary research was the sociology of Jamaican popular music, allowing him to refine and fortify the ideas he had previously developed. An edited and condensed version of his thesis was published as "Jamaican Rebel Music" in the journal *Race and Class* in 1976, the year of his graduation from Goldsmith's. Several of his articles on music were published in *Race Today*, and in 1976-77 he was a regular reviewer for *Melody Maker* magazine. The *Melody Maker* articles were interesting not only for what they said but how they said it. Johnson used a prose style that was spare, crisp, and unself-conscious, just right for the task – very different from the verbosity of his early unpublished prose pieces. The precise standard English of these articles became typical of his journalistic style, and contrasted with the rich Creole of his poetry. The difference indicates his maturing as a linguistic craftsman, carefully choosing his style, tone, and voice according to the form.

Also in 1973, previous to his registering at Goldsmith's, he formed a group called Rasta Love: three drummers, Charli, Baili, and Fari; a bassist, Stani; and a flutist, Nevi. They backed him in his increasingly frequent recitals in London, and, by mid-1974, in other major cities in England. Simultaneously, his studies at Goldsmith's, and his job as an assembly worker in Croydon and later as a copywriter at Virgin Records, consumed a great deal of his time, preventing him from writing as much poetry as he wished:

"What man would really like to do is jus satta an' write."³ It was, nevertheless, a creative period in his life, and by the end of 1974 he had enough poetry from which to select the contents of his second book.

Dread Beat and Blood, a collection of twenty-seven poems, was published in 1975. Although no protagonist is named, the voice of the poet emerges as that of a persona whose path and conflicts can be clearly discerned through five sections that constitute something of a narrative structure. In the first section, "Doun de road," which developed out of Johnson's original "Notes on Brixton" manuscript, the poet critically comments on the activities of black youth who merely "scank" resistance against "de wicked" (the police), and direct their violence among themselves. *Five Nights of Bleeding*, republished here, points dramatically to the problem:

rebellion rushing down the wrong road,
storm blowing down the wrong tree.

The poet conveys an ambivalence toward the music in which his rhythm is based. On the one hand, the dread throbbing of the dub-style reggae is not cathartic but compounds the inner rage of marginalized and alienated youth. On the other, the music is seen as an actual and metaphorical source of vindication and identity – renewing, enabling, and strengthening, as in *Street 66*:

outta dis rock
shall come
a greena riddim
even more dread
dan what
de breeze of glory bread.
vibratin violence
is how wi move
rockin wid green riddim
de drout
and dry root out.

The poem *You Rebels* gives narrative movement to the section. A submerg'd political consciousness begins to appear among youth who decide to abandon the scanking and to reject the cautionary wisdom of their accommodationist elders, the "shallow councilin/ of the soot-brained/ sage in chain;/ wreckin thin-shelled words..." And the final three poems of the section point a way out from the self-destructive responses revealed in the

opening ones. "Fratricide is only/ the first phase," announces the poet in *Doun De Road*. And while the fratricidal violence "is a room full of fact you cant walk out," the nature of the conflict begins to be clarified as Enoch Powell, the fascist National Front, and the fire-bombing of immigrant residences and businesses capture headlines and galvanize the defensive militancy of black Britain.

In the second section, "Time to explode," the poet turns temporarily into himself to meditate on the subterranean pain and rage that need to be confronted for identity and authenticity to be achieved. In *Two Sides of Silence*, he poignantly counterposes the desire for the silence of tranquility with the outer silence of public indifference to the turmoil that makes individual and domestic tranquility elusive. Ending with the poem *Time to Explode*, the second section erupts into the third, "Song of blood."

The first piece in the "Song of blood" section is *John De Crow*, a prose poem narrative of colonial rebellion, in which the Jamaican johncrow, the despised but necessary carrion bird, becomes a symbol of the slave laborer who overthrows the corrupting master/slave relationship by killing the plantation master and his family. After the poet's reminder of that bitter history, the following three poems, *Come Wi Goh Dung Deh*, *Problems*, and *Song of Blood*, focus on the contemporary neo-colony of Jamaica, although neither Jamaica nor any other West Indian island is identified, which allows application to any island of similar historical experience, or even to the colonial experience in the metropole itself. The colonial black finds no solace, neither in the return home nor in exile.

The fourth section, "Bass culture," comprises the strongest tribute in the book to the reggae music that provides the subsistent rhythm throughout. Two of the poems are dedicated to the reggae performers and recording artists, Big Youth and the Upsetters. The poem *Reggae Sounds* is one of the purest examples of Johnson's reggae poetry, and, together with *Bass Culture*, provide an apt poetic illustration of his theory of socio-political realities affecting and being affected by the shifts in Jamaican music:

foot-drop find drum, blood story,
bass history is a moving
is a hurting black story.

Song of Rising raises the vision of a condition or an era of peace and love that will succeed the conflicts explored to that point, and in so doing leads to the final section.

"One love" consists of four poems in Rastafari style. The first, *Peace an Love*, is patterned on the prayer chant of a Rasta meeting, or groundation.

The second, *Wi A Warriyah*, is similarly patterned, and is dedicated to the group of drummers and musicians who accompanied Johnson in his 1973-74 recitals, Rasta Love. The third, *To Show It So*, is typical Rasta psalmody. The final poem, *One Love*, is a positive call for such. Yet its final stanza contains lines that signal a movement in Johnson's consciousness toward a new phase that would include a rejection of Rastafarian culturalism:

but love is jus a word;
give it MEANIN
thru HACKSHAN...

In 1973-74, Johnson cultivated a personal and public style that was thoroughly Rastafarian except for one important element. The stumbling block was the Rasta belief in the divinity of Haile Selassie, which Johnson could not accept. He also began to realize that he was among a growing number of youth who affected Africanisms and feigned Rasta belief but whose convictions were shallow:

There is a whole heap a dread-locks man on yah. From London to Manchester. Every-body jus natty, yu kno. But nuff a de man dem naw difen nottin. Dem is jus culturally dread. Dem noh have no concept, noh doctrine and more important, dem noh have noh love deep wid-in dem fe one another, each or all. Dat is bittah.⁴

A subsequent poem, *Reality Poem*, which would be included in his third book, sums up the new phase in his political consciousness that was already taking shape by the time *Dread Beat and Blood* was published:

dis is di age of decishan
soh mek we leggo relijan...
dis is di age af reality
soh mek we leggo mitalagy

The shift in Johnson's outlook had been aided by his association, since 1973, with *Race Today*, which he officially joined in 1976. The journal *Race Today* was originally "a race relations rag of the Institute of Race Relations, set up by business interests and academic interests to study the native," as Johnson put it in an interview in 1982 (Morris 1987:19). In 1973, the editorship was offered to Darcus Howe, who had been a comrade of Johnson in the Panthers. With the assistance of John LaRose, Howe seized the entire operation, moved it to Brixton, and began building a political organization with the journal as its core. The *Race Today* Collective, as the organization came to be called, directed the journal toward blacks and Asians in Britain, and to

“those who would support first their independent thought and then their independent activation,” as Farrukh Dhondy (1979:68), a member of the Collective, described its purpose. The Collective set out to encourage and coordinate the activities of progressive mass-based organizations. While the emphasis was on black initiatives, it attempted to reach out from a position of strength to workers and immigrants across ethnic and cultural lines, thereby confronting not only state power but the enmity of black nationalists and middle class blacks. Moreover, the movement rejected the claims of existing left-wing parties to speak out and act for Asian, African, and West Indian workers in Britain apart from the independent initiatives of these workers themselves. Johnson’s poem *Independant Intavenshan* proclaimed this rejection:

di SWP [Socialist Workers Party] can’t set wi free
 di IMG [International Marxist Group] can’t dhu it fi wi
 di Communist Pawty, cho, dem too awty-fawty
 an’ di laybahrites dem naw goh fite fi wi rites

The intellectual mentor of the Race Today Collective was the Trinidadian historian, philosopher, and Pan-Africanist, C.L.R. James, who, in his final years, was cared for by members of the Collective. James had introduced issues of colonialism, race, and culture into the debates of the international socialist movement, and had emphasized the necessity for autonomous action by black people independent of the directives of the central committees of European socialist parties (Thelwell 1989:25-26).

Johnson’s third book, *Inglan Is a Bitch*, was published by Race Today Publications in 1980. The twelve poems in the book are more overtly and consistently political and reportorial than were those in his earlier books. *Independant Intavenshan* and *Reality Poem* convey his appropriation of the Jamesian philosophy of Race Today. The other poems chronicle persons, places, and events in the conflicts between black Britain and state power in the 1970s which the established media either ignored or misrepresented. The only anomaly in the book is *Jamaica Lullaby*. It is in standard English; the others are entirely in the Creole-based nation language of Jamaicans in Britain. It is also lyrical and introspective in a way that the others are not. Although dedicated to Olive Morris, an activist and community worker who died in London in 1979, the poem was actually written years before the others in the book, in 1972, and was originally entitled “Moon and Tears.” While consistent with some of Johnson’s other writings in the early 1970s, it is of a style which became unrepresentative of his published writing after 1973.

The title of the book raises the question of Johnson's attitude toward and relationship with the England that is the place of the struggles which he chronicles. The persona of the title poem is that of an aging immigrant laborer who has lived a life of hard work in England, but who is facing redundancy, pauperization, and the dole. For this black laborer, exploited and marginalized, England is certainly "a bitch." The poem ends with the rhetorical question, "Is whey wi a goh dhu 'bout it?" The intended answer is not that black people should flee from their struggles in England to the tropical land of birth.

It had taken Johnson some years to arrive at that viewpoint. His first return to Jamaica after migrating in 1963 was in the summer of 1974. There he was interviewed and recited some of his poems on Jeremy Verity's "Poetry Now" program on Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation radio. Young Jamaican poets who heard him, such as Michael Smith and Orlando Wong (now Oku Onuora), were encouraged by his voice to continue to develop the Creole performance poetry they had begun to fashion. More important for Johnson than promoting his work at the time was the opportunity to bask in the music of the island and to soak up the latest linguistic innovations that were absorbed into the lyrics from the streets of Kingston. Even more important than this was Johnson's personal quest to reunite with his large extended family, especially with his father in Kingston. His experience of their hardships, as well as the general island-wide poverty, triggered the poem *Come Wi Goh Dung Deh*, published in *Dread Beat and Blood*.

Back in London in late summer 1974, Johnson decided that he would return to live in Jamaica in about four years. In September he wrote:

Well the four years are a long way off but I am sure my time will come soon. I am more sure than ever that I have something to contribute towards the liberation of my people. If it has to be my life then it will be my life. I only hope it won't be too difficult to find work when I get there. But work or no work I will return in due time. My father needs me, my brothers and sisters need me, all of my relatives need me.⁵

To the end of 1977, he continued to express his longing to return to Jamaica. But with a wife and, by then, three children in England to support, the four-year period he had given himself in which to do so had eroded.

Early in 1978, Johnson decided firmly against any possibility of his returning to live in Jamaica. He noted that blacks in Britain were digging in for a very crucial struggle in their history – that of resistance to recolonization in the metropole. They were not running away nor did they consider themselves defensively against a wall. His return to Jamaica would be an abdication of responsibility, "a retrograde step," in the struggle "of which I am a part."⁶ Moreover, he was beginning to be repelled by the narrowness of

Jamaican society and the violence that permeated it⁷ – a revulsion that was unfortunately later confirmed by the murder by political thugs in Jamaica in 1983 of the poet Michael Smith, whose work Johnson had promoted.

The title *Inglan Is a Bitch*, then, suggests not a retreat from an unpleasant experience but a determination to engage the “bitch” in a struggle for a full exercise of civil and political rights and for the reversal of working class alienation. The poems in the book grew out of that engagement.

In 1977, utilizing his contacts at Virgin Records, Johnson made the first recording of his poems set to music. *Poet and the Roots*, as the record was called, contained two of his poems, *All Wi Doin Is Defending* and *Five Nights of Bleeding*, with music composed by Johnson himself in collaboration with a group of reggae musicians. It was a tentative and uncertain beginning. The strong rhythms of the poems were forced out of their aural shape to conform to the music, when the music should have been composed and played more to serve the poems. The full power of the poems was consequently lost.

Dread Beat an' Blood (1978) was his first complete record album. The quality of the music and the technical competence of the recording was a great improvement on the initial effort of 1977. The influence of the arranging and mixing talents of his band leader and musical collaborator, Dennis “Blackbeard” Bovell, was obvious. Johnson’s voice was more confident, projecting more clearly the power of the poems. But the poems and the music were still not sufficiently consonant, both seeming to battle for domination. For those who had not yet taken the opportunity to read his poems, however, or to hear him read them publicly in London and other British cities, *Dread Beat an' Blood* was a suitable introduction to the unique synthesis of personal and political experience in Johnson’s art, as well as to what would become the most consistent of his themes: confronting social and political reality, in Britain and in Jamaica.

A year later the second album, *Forces of Victory* (1979), was released. For the first time it was stated on the record sleeve that all the words and the music were composed by Johnson. It was an appropriate acknowledgement, for on this LP the music more obviously served the poems, rather than the poems subserving the music. Consequently, Johnson’s voice was now calmer but surer; calmer but dreader. He had put aside some of the self-conscious emoting of the first recordings, allowing the clearer emergence of the artistry and the vision that went into his poems before he ever got near a recording studio. Bovell and his band continued to be very much a crucial part of the effort. Music and poems had almost reached the level of artistic symbiosis that Johnson and his musicians had been striving for from the first.

Bass Culture (1980), the third album, confirmed the impression and promise given by the three previous recordings that each of Johnson's poetic/musical efforts would be better than the last. Music and voice were now nearly perfectly together – with *Street 66* as the dread apogee of the Johnson and Bovell collaboration. Johnson was, by this time, so confident in his work that he could allow himself a relatively frivolous piece like the lyrical-satirical *Loraine*. It was not totally frivolous – none of Johnson's written and performed wordworks ever are; and *Loraine* warrants careful listening for its understanding of the complexities as well as some of the nonsense of man/woman courtship.

His audience had to wait four years for the next album, *Making History* (1984). A major reason for the wait was Johnson's sense of artistic integrity. As explained in the album's sleeve notes, he refused to succumb to the commercial pressure to churn out new material yearly. All of the seven poems on this album were written after the previous recording, which was not true of the earlier albums, each of which included a mix of older and recent poems. Moreover, it was the first recorded collection of poems that had not been published in any of his three books, although some of them had been published singly. Musically and poetically, *Making History* maintains and extends the levels of artistry, insight, and vision that *Forces of Victory* and *Bass Culture* carefully achieved. The jazz strain in Johnson's music, somewhat muted before, emerges.

The title of the album refers to events, movements, heroes, and martyrs in Britain and the Caribbean. The poems deal with the specifics of oppression and resistance in England and elsewhere: government corruption, racist politics, the obscurantism of the press, the backwardness of the ruling classes in the West and the East ("di Soviet system naw progress"), the solidarity of minorities and workers within Britain and Europe, and urban insurrections of black youth in England. The real hero of *Making History*, both as a poem and a person, is Dada, Johnson's father. *Reggae fi Dada* was written after his trip to Jamaica in 1982 to bury his father in a "Stranger's Burying Groun / near to mhum an cousin Daris / nat far fram di quarry / doun a August Town." This poem is Linton Kwesi Johnson at his political and human best: the insight that through this one ordinary poor life, and more than ordinarily painful death, the bitter social and economic realities of post-slave Jamaica, "where di present is haunted by di pass," are exemplified. More so than the earlier poem *Come Wi Goh Dung Deh*, written after Johnson's first return to Jamaica in 1974, *Reggae fi Dada* is Johnson's true homecoming poem: "a deh soh mi bawn / get fi know bout staam / learn fi cling to di dawn..." It is full of love and knowledge, a moving gift from Johnson to the memory of his father.

The release of Johnson's recordings outside of England helped to create an international audience which his published poems alone might not have reached. Although the recordings rode a wave of increasing world-wide enthusiasm for reggae, the originality of the Johnson/Bovell music and Johnson's oral interpretations appealed to a cross-section of listeners that was wider than the reggae audience. Responding to demand, he spent much of his time and energy in 1982-85 touring and performing internationally with Dennis Bovell's Dub Band. By the end of 1985, the arduous touring was taking a toll. He was hard-pressed to find the time and silence he wanted to resume his writing. In December of that year he gave what he called his farewell concert in London. The recording of that concert became his fifth album, *Linton Kwesi Johnson in Concert with the Dub Band* (1986).

It is difficult to assess the value of the work of a man whose career is in no way near an end. Besides his books, his poems have been included in numerous anthologies in Britain and the West Indies. German and Italian translations of his books have been published in Europe (Johnson 1984 and 1989). He has recited and performed in fourteen European countries, in the Caribbean islands of Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, Martinique, Trinidad, and Cuba, in several cities of the United States and Canada, and in Japan. He has appeared in televised interviews, readings, and performances in the United States, Britain, France, Germany, and Switzerland. In 1978 a filmed documentary of his career was produced by the Arts Council of Great Britain. In 1987 his *LKJ in Concert* LP was nominated for a Grammy award by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences in the United States. In addition to a 1977 award of the prestigious C. Day Lewis Fellowship for Poetry, he has been chosen as an associate fellow of the Centre for Caribbean Studies at the University of Warwick and an honorary fellow of Wolverhampton Polytechnic. In 1990 he received an award from the city of Pisa, Italy at the XIII Premio Internazionale Ultimo Novecento for his contributions to poetry and popular music.

Unknown to much of his audience outside of Britain, he has made important contributions as a journalist, editor, and writer/director/producer of documentaries independently and for BBC radio and television. His already vast knowledge of Jamaican music culminated in a period of intense research in Jamaica in 1982 which led to a masterful ten-hour BBC radio documentary history of the island's music, first broadcast in 1983. One of his most important contributions as a member of Race Today was as the editor (1983-88) of the *Race Today Review*, an annual journal of the arts and literature. The journal consistently published new fiction and poetry not only from within Britain but also from the West Indies, North America, Africa, and Asia. In 1978, inspired by the earlier Caribbean Artists Movement

(Walmsley 1992:316), he initiated Creation for Liberation in conjunction with Race Today, through which he mobilized fellow artists and writers to link them with the local and international struggles with which Race Today involved itself. He was instrumental in bringing to British and international exposure the Jamaican reggae poets Oku Onuora and Michael Smith in the early 1980s and, more recently, Jean Binta Breeze.

The poet and historian Edward Kamau Brathwaite included an assessment of Johnson's poetry in the development of his thesis on Caribbean nation language in his book *History of the Voice* (1984:34-35). McCrum, Cran & MacNeil's *The Story of English* (1986:310-11), the published version of the United States Public Broadcasting Service's television series of the same name, refers to Johnson's contribution to the development of varieties of the language. His poems promise to endure in printed form, regardless of whether or not they continue to be performed. In a review article in New York City's *Village Voice* (1980:66), Thulani Davis missed the mark in stating, "These are not poems that should be read – they are to be heard and understood quickly."⁸ Her intent was to praise the orality of the poems. But it needs to be remembered that Johnson is a writer; he has not simply scripted performances, as did, for example, Michael Smith, whose poems were originally spoken and dramatized and later laboriously written with the careful assistance of the poet Mervyn Morris (1990:24). Johnson's poems reward re-reading and study for Creole usage and innovation, rhythmic structure, patterns of imagery – and as a cumulative chronicle of the struggles of black Britain in the 1970s and 1980s.

Johnson has never been an absolutist, and his commitments have always been tempered with a degree of pragmatism. After he announced his farewell concert in 1985, he left open the possibility that future circumstances might prompt him to resume his touring and performing with the Dub Band. The first two months of 1990 found him doing just that. More important, he resumed writing in 1989 after a lengthy post-1985 dry period. On the same day on which C. L. R. James died, May 31, 1989, Johnson completed a poem called *Di Good Life*. That same week, he read it on a BBC television tribute to James. The first line of the poem is one word, "sowshallism" (socialism). Few poets could begin thus and follow with something that is no more than a political treatise in verse. It is a measure of Johnson's ability and sensibility that he succeeds in writing a poem that humanizes "sowshallism" in the extended metaphor of an old shepherd, whose description mirrors the image of the elderly C.L.R. James:

look ow im stretch out pan im back
 pan di brown grass
 di white hair pan im branze head
 like a kushan gense di weepin willow tree

In the following months, he completed his *Tings an Times* sequence of poems, organically interrelated in the same way that his 1972 "Notes on Brixton" had been composed. In a gentle and mature voice, the poet recollects, takes stock, and ponders years of black struggle in Britain, and his place in that struggle. He shuns any tendency that might exist to make him a prophet or guru: "mi naw preach / mi naw teach / mi jus a show yu ow mi seit." Without forsaking the militancy that is conveyed in his *Making History* poems, he places the particular conflicts in which he has participated and about which he has written in the perspective of a larger and humbling process: "histri biggah dan mi ar yu yu know." Moreover, the innocent idealist has been sobered by his experience of human treachery and intrigue; "dizzied / doped / traumatized," he lies "ship-wreck gense di sans af di tides a di times." Yet the tone ultimately is not defeatist,

an him hear a nex vice like di sea seh
 sometimes di pungent owedah af decay
 signal seh bran new life deh pan di way

Johnson tested the new poems in 1990 in performances and readings in Europe and North America. His international audience, which had waited fallow for several years, received them enthusiastically. In 1991 the poems were included on Johnson's first recorded LP in six years, and soon after in his fourth book. Both the LP and the book are entitled *Tings an Times*. But other than containing the new poems, the recording and the book vary in their significance. The recording gives us Johnson's voice backed by new Johnson/Bovell music that continues the innovations and reggae fusions begun in the earlier recordings. To drum, bass, lead guitar, keyboard, and horns have been added flute, violin, and accordion. Reviewers have variously noticed not only the jazz infusion but have also heard influences from South Africa, Algeria, Hungary, New Orleans zydeco, Tex-Mex, and Cuban funk. While the listener and reader can agree or disagree with the choice of a particular rhythm, tempo, or tune for an individual poem, one has to accept that Johnson's musical decisions are an extension of his prosodic craft. Moreover, the diverse musical influences heard on the recording manifest his internationalist vision. Johnson has worked through the geographical particulars of his life – from the hills of Clarendon to the streets of London –

to arrive at the ports of world culture: "I believe in humanity, that all races have more in common than they do different. If you're not thinking in international terms in the 20th century you're backward" (Christgau 1991:80).

The book *Tings an Times* constitutes a literary itinerary of Johnson's political/poetic voyage from 1972. The new poems are preceded by seventeen earlier ones that were previously published or were first recorded on the LP *Making History*. The book confirms that Johnson's writing has developed spirally: as his sensibilities and technique have matured, he nevertheless constantly returns to retrieve and revise characteristic qualities of his earlier voice and style.

One of the new poems, *Beacon of Hope*, a meditation on the Jamaican "peeni waali" (firefly), and dedicated to John LaRose, is a refinement of an even younger Johnson. It is in standard English, a reminder that language along the entire Creole to standard English continuum (Alleyne 1985:168) has always provided an available choice for him. The tone of the poem is reflective and unashamedly tender – not a surprise to those who were involved with Johnson in his early writing years, but perhaps a shock for those who may have heard his voice only as stridently political. What is different about the poem in comparison with early work is the absence in it of the necessary self-centeredness of first writing. The well-earned humility, openness, and world-sense that characterize the *Tings an Times* poems are warmly evident in the final lines of *Beacon of Hope*:

tomorrow a stranger will enter
my hut my cave my cool cavern of gloom
I will give him bread
he will bring good news from afar
I will give him water
he will bring a gift of light.

NOTES

1. Walmsley (1992:314) mentions the influence of LeRoi Jones (now Amiri Baraka) on Johnson.
2. Linton Kwesi Johnson, personal correspondence, October 23, 1973.
3. Johnson, personal correspondence, undated, late summer or early autumn, 1974.
4. Johnson, personal correspondence, undated, late summer or early autumn, 1974.
5. Johnson, personal correspondence, September 2, 1974.
6. Johnson, personal correspondence, April 29, 1978.

7. Johnson, personal correspondence, April 29, 1978.

8. Davis's observation seems to me to be countered by the fact that in every performance with the Dub Band, Johnson insists on reciting some of his poems without accompaniment, usually at the beginning of the performance, in order to focus the audience's concentration on the importance of the word. Compare to Praeger's (1992:45-46) discussion of the literature of orality.

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NEITHER SWEET NOR NUTRITIOUS

Sugar. GEORGE C. ABBOTT. London: Routledge, 1990. xv + 396 pp. (Cloth £45.00)

The Making of a Sugar Giant: Tate and Lyle 1859-1989. PHILIPPE CHALMIN. Translated by Erica Long-Michalke. London: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1990. xvii + 782 pp. (Cloth US\$ 57.00 or £32.00)

Sugar has about as many facets as there are faces to a sucrose crystal: binder, bulking agent, cariogenic factor, chemical, colorant, commodity, energy source, fermentation substrate, flavor enhancer, medication, preservative, stabilizer, sweetener, and texture modifier are aspects that immediately come to mind. Millions of people and billions of dollars are employed worldwide in the production and marketing of what has become one of the basic foodstuffs of humanity. In the Caribbean and elsewhere, sugar has been the mortar in the building of nations. Sugar is a field of inquiry for all kinds of professionals outside the industry – natural and social scientists; bankers, civil servants, politicians, and trade unionists; journalists and librarians; doctors, engineers, food technologists, and nutritionists – and there has long been a need for an overview that answers their questions (or suggests where answers may be found) and provides a conceptual frame of reference, something along the lines of the outstanding but now dated *The World's Sugar: Progress and Policy* by Vladimir P. Timoshenko & Boris C. Swerling (1957) or the International Sugar Council's *The World Sugar Economy: Structure and Policies* (1963).

Along comes a book simply entitled *Sugar* from a reputable publisher and by an author identified on the half-title page as a senior lecturer at the University of Glasgow and consultant to UNCTAD and the Common-

wealth Secretariat. Problem solved? Regrettably, no. It seems the Trade Descriptions Act is no bar to a deceptive book title, and in accordance with the Peter Principle, an author's position and affiliations would tend to be inversely indicative of his competence.

The opening words of Abbott's Introduction – "Ever since sugar was first introduced to the western world over 400 years ago" – prepare one for some imprecision, but not for the unbelievable hash of misconceptions, misconstructions, and self-contradictions that follows. To the bafflement of expert and layman alike, raw sugar is a "low-value product" and refined sugar is a "high-value product," but "the margin between raw and refined sugar is, on average, quite small" and "contrary to popular belief, refining operations are not a very lucrative business"; "[sugar cane] harvesting is done by hand, though the process has been extensively mechanized"; the 1974 world market price boom "led to considerable over-expansion and excess capacity," but "very little [of the industry's profits] went into investment and capital replacement"; "the rate of conversion of sucrose to sugar is 1.17 to 1"; "molasses is used to produce alcohol [...] and, more recently, ethanol"; one European Currency Unit is equal to £1.69; "the whole production process [of sugar beet] lasts from 3 to 7 weeks"; refiners on the west coast of the United States "often face severe competition from beet and cane sugar produced in Hawaii"; "refined sugar does not travel well. It tends to deteriorate rapidly"; and so on and so forth.

Abbott fulfills his promise "to provide a proper perspective of the history and early developments of the industry as a background against which to understand and analyze the changes which have taken place" by galloping through events from the origin of sugar cane to 1986 – historical association of sugar production and slavery, rise of the beet sugar industry, technical transformations, and all – in less than three pages. For him, 1974 – the year of a world market price spike and the end of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement and the United States Sugar Act – "effectively marks the watershed between what might be called the traditional relationships within the industry and modern developments."

This foreshortened view is just as well, however, as Abbott's occasional forays into the more distant past are accident-prone: strange names appear among the signatories to the Brussels Convention of 1902; bilateral Cuban-American talks in 1930 are mixed up with the multilateral Chadbourne Agreement of 1931; and the large sugar estates in Cuba are said to have been broken up after the Revolution and distributed to 35,000 smallholders. The dozen or so years within Abbott's focus, moreover, are room enough for infelicities due to his indiscriminate use of sources (just what he happened to come across, to judge by the omission of basic texts from the bibli-

ography) and a habit of stringing together revised and uncorrected figures in time series.

The most recent date to be found in Abbott's book is 1986. But virtually the entire account is couched in the present tense, giving obsolete information the appearance of current validity. "The world sugar industry is clearly in a very bad way," we are told, but "sugar is not all played out" if the industry follows Abbott's advice. Paradoxically, despite a "bewildering" diversity of conditions, systems, and practices, sugar-producing countries have shown "an uncanny degree of uniformity" in the way they have tried to solve their problems, but why this might be so is not explored. Even where one can agree with Abbott's identification of issues to be addressed, such as protectionism, any resemblance between his portrayal and a real sugar industry in any part of the world today is more or less coincidental.

This is not the sort of literature bought for a holiday read. Indeed, probably most copies are purchased with public funds. A book entitled *Sugar* that does not adequately treat a single aspect cannot be regarded as anything other than a fraud. British merchants are legally required to describe their goods accurately, and buyers of this book ought to get their money back. Should they spend it then on Chalmin's history of Tate & Lyle?

Chalmin's sights are set on a business rather than just a company history, and roughly a third of his work is actually devoted to the world sugar economy – the environment in which T&L grew from nineteenth-century British refiners into the world's largest sugar and sweetener group, with interests stretching from beet and cane sugar to potato starch, and from Queensland, Australia, via North America to Kaba in Hungary.

This is a panorama that would tax the resources and skills of a highly accomplished economic historian. The present work is a "slightly shortened version" of a 1981 doctoral thesis at the Sorbonne, published in French in 1983 and re-issued in English translation seven years later with a brief post-script covering the period 1980-89. Chalmin was lucky to meet a succession of indulgent supervisors, examiners, and publishers.

An 800-page book is evidence of industriousness. It is not the author's fault that the help he received from T&L (which he indicates exceeded the welcome a British student would have received from a French firm) did not include access to minutes of directors' meetings. Understandably, for the years up to the latter 1970s he adds little of substance to the account of a leading insider, Antony Hugill's enjoyable history of T&L, *Sugar and all that...* (1978). Nor can a doctoral candidate be criticized when the promised parallel analysis of the last century and a half of the world sugar economy turns out to be more narrative than analysis. Notwithstanding all that, a solid reference book might have resulted.

Less comprehensible is the launch of an unrevised English edition after T&L, as the postscript acknowledges, had evolved in a very different direction to that repeatedly predicted in the preceding 240 pages, which also pulls the rug out from under Chalmin's in any event debatable concluding generalizations. But by the time the author bids "our heroes" farewell with a "Good luck for the next ten years!" it is clear that it is unsafe to rely on anything he says unless corroborated by another source.

To begin with, there is Chalmin's cavalier attitude towards names and dates: the Cuban Verdeja Act of 1926, named after the minister responsible, is attributed to "the president of the Cuban Republic, Verdekja [sic]"; Ramsay MacDonald supposedly was the British prime minister in January 1937; Trinidad allegedly adhered to the West Indies Federation in 1948, but Jamaica was never part of it, etc. Trivial one by one, the inaccuracies and terminological inexactitudes add up like bird droppings to a pile of guano. Then there are familiar but odd-looking quotations which, on checking, are found to have been re-translated from the French. Confidence is further sapped on fruitlessly searching the chaotic bibliography for titles referred to in the text and finding countless misspellings and miscitations. Nor is the bizarre index of assistance, the opening entry under "A" reading: "first major international sugar agreement." Any residual inclination to regard this as a serious work of scholarship is finally impaled on one of Chalmin's numerous exclamation marks and rhetorical flourishes like "We have kept the main dish for last!"

Modern sugar factories are highly automated, but they don't run on autopilot, as seems to have governed the publication of these books, and there is quality control. Also puzzling to a sugar economist is how a volume of more than twice the weight, which moreover presumably incurred a considerable translation cost, can be sold for nearly 30 percent less than another directed at the same market. White sugar has on occasion been obtainable on the world market at a lower price than raw sugar, but the reasons why were plain for all to see. Until these two books appeared, there was no reason to fear that intense exposure to sugar literature might cause mental caries. It is to be hoped that they remain aberrations.

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SAMUEL MARTÍNEZ

OF PEASANTS, PLANTATIONS, AND IMMIGRANT
PROLETARIANS

Dominican Sugar Plantations: Production and Foreign Labor Integration. MARTIN F. MURPHY. New York: Praeger, 1991. xii + 186 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

Peasants in Distress: Poverty and Unemployment in the Dominican Republic. ROSEMARY VARGAS-LUNDIUS. Boulder CO: Westview 1991. xxi + 387 pp. (Paper US\$ 32.95)

Few other places in the Caribbean region have as great a potential for international conflict as the island of Hispaniola. The historical antagonism between Haiti and the Dominican Republic is no doubt known to readers of this journal, as is the recent upsurge in tension between the two countries, which culminated in the expulsion of tens of thousands of Haitian immigrants from the Dominican Republic, from June to September 1991. The quickening pace of events, added to the worsening spiral of economic hardship gripping both nations, threaten to render obsolete even the most recent analyses of relations between the two countries. Even so, against the background of an increasingly acrimonious debate between the Dominican government and international human rights organizations accusing it of enslaving Haitian immigrants in the cane fields, the appearance of two works by long-time students of the migration of Haitians as cane workers to the Dominican Republic is particularly timely.

Neither work analyzes this migration in isolation, but takes it as a point of departure for diagnosing certain of the Dominican Republic's economic development problems. Murphy's *Dominican Sugar Plantations* is the more tightly focused of the two. Yet even its aims are broad: to describe and explain how labor is used today in the fields and factories of the Dominican

Republic's three sugar corporations. The topics it covers include the history of the Dominican sugar industry, the mechanisms by which Haitian nationals are recruited to work on the sugar estates, the terms and conditions of employment of cane workers in the Dominican sugar industry, the push and pull factors which encourage migration from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, anti-Haitian prejudice in the Dominican Republic, and the Dominican sugar industry's ethnic division of labor. Vargas's *Peasants in Distress* aims at nothing less than a comprehensive understanding of the Dominican Republic's rural development problems. It discusses, among other things, the difficulty of defining and measuring unemployment in a Third World economy, the history of the Dominican peasantry, living conditions in the Dominican countryside, produce marketing and price policies, the Dominican Republic's land distribution pattern and land reform efforts, agricultural credit, Haitian immigration, land degradation, and rural emigration.

It has often been remarked upon as a paradox that the Dominican Republic recruits men from Haiti to meet the seasonal labor demand of its sugar industry, while its own rural people suffer increasing poverty. The question conventionally asked of this situation is, "Why don't Dominicans cut cane?" After reading Murphy's book, few will remain satisfied with this way of framing the issue. He asks instead, "Why does the Dominican sugar industry prefer not to employ Dominicans as cane cutters?" (p. 113). According to him, the answers are largely found in the place the Dominican Republic has occupied historically in the world sugar trade. "Throughout history," he explains, "of the principal factors related to production (land, labor, capital, technology and trade), it is the labor factor that [Dominican sugar producers] could control most effectively" (p. 4). The Dominican Republic has not enjoyed preferential access to lucrative European and U.S. markets as consistently as other world sugar producers have. Only by keeping labor costs low did Dominican sugar producers survive in the open market. Murphy demonstrates convincingly that employing immigrant labor has helped Dominican cane growers keep labor costs at a minimum.

Haitian seasonal migrants are more than cheap labor to cane growers. They are a labor force which can be obliged to work Sundays and nights at no extra pay, or left idle and hungry for days, or dismissed from employment, or deployed to another work camp without notice, as best suits production demands. For Dominican cane growers, to draw day laborers from the mainstream of the Dominican working classes, rather than to recruit them from Haiti, would be to accept a lower level of control than they now exert over the harvest labor force. Murphy suggests that having such a pliable labor force enables management to adjust field operations more readily to the sugar mills' demand for cane. Yet he has on the whole perhaps con-

centrated too much on labor cost, to the neglect of systematic analysis of the labor control factor. He misses at least two good opportunities to consider the broader implications of the industry's coercive labor utilization practices. One is provided by human rights activists' allegation that Dominican cane growers treat Haitian cane workers as slaves. By simply dismissing this charge as unsubstantiated by fact, Murphy passes up a chance to comment on whether or not coercive practices in the Dominican sugar cane harvests of today might be in any way a legacy of how slave plantations of the nineteenth century used field labor. Second, Murphy observes that multi-stranded personal ties – most notably of ritual coparenthood – commonly link management personnel and year-round workers on the sugar estates. He makes much of how this stands at odds with the purportedly impersonal character of labor relations on the modern, corporate-owned plantation (pp. 67-69). It is surprising that he does not go one step further, and ask if employing seasonal migrants as cane cutters might increase the level of control which management can exercise over the harvest labor force by minimizing the personal dues implicit in employer/employee relationships in the Latin American cultural context.

Vargas's *Peasants in Distress* was first presented as a Ph.D. thesis at the University of Lund in 1988. Her adviser there was the Haitianist scholar, Mats Lundahl, and her book is in some ways the Dominicanist equivalent of Lundahl's (1979) on Haiti. Like Lundahl's, it is a compendium of available knowledge on the country's agrarian sector. It is perhaps inevitable that a book as comprehensive as Vargas's would be out of date before it reached print. Even so, the degree to which she relies on information predating the return of Balaguer to the Dominican presidency in 1986 is disturbing. Readers needing information about the impact on rural areas of post-1986 economic trends – e.g., galloping inflation, devaluation of the Dominican peso, diminishing state interference in consumer markets, the collapse of international coffee prices – will search this book in vain.

For Vargas, the country's failure to nationalize its cane harvest labor force is merely the most salient manifestation of a much larger syndrome: the inability of its rural areas to generate enough employment at decent levels of remuneration to keep people from abandoning the land, swelling the cities, and emigrating overseas. Much of the blame for the country's present economic malaise, she suggests, rests with the misplaced emphasis of successive governments on urban growth and capital-intensive manufacturing, at the expense of smallholder agriculture. Most of her criticisms of state intervention hit the mark. Yet the unremitting negativism of her assessment of everything the Dominican state has done over the past hundred years leaves one at a loss as to what the government might do to make matters

better for the peasant. For example, if the government makes easy credit available to farmers, wealthier people get the lion's share of it, which worsens an already highly-unequal distribution of wealth (pp. 192-98). If it doesn't, rural producers are left entirely at the mercy of usurers (pp. 198-206). According to Vargas, much the same is true of government land reform efforts: the land has mostly gone to political cronies, not to the needy (p. 170). Whether the government distributes land or encourages its concentration, the rich get richer and the poor, poorer. Vargas's doom-and-gloom attitude severely limits the policy relevance of her analysis. It also raises doubts about whether she is correct in singling out state intervention in the economy for criticism. If government action always ends up benefiting the wealthy and influential and harming the poor and powerless, might that not be the fault of how the country's political economy is instituted, rather than of the government initiatives themselves?

Similarly unenlightening is her tendency to conclude that every economic problem furthers emigration from rural areas. Surprisingly, it is only late in the book (pp. 328-30) that she stops briefly to ponder the opposite side of the equation, i.e., that massive emigration might depress rural productivity. Vargas cites Griffin (1976) in arguing that "the negative effects of the migration of peasants to higher paid jobs abroad have been exaggerated" (p. 328). If this is so, why have the positive effects of emigration been so slow to materialize in the Dominican countryside? Vargas's only answer is that continued Haitian immigration depresses agricultural wages (p. 330). Nowhere does she seriously consider the possibility that, by taking jobs in the cane fields that no Dominican wants, Haitian immigrants might create more jobs than they take from Dominican workers. If the employment of Haitians as cane cutters were to be abandoned, it is probable that sugar production would largely collapse, and tens of thousands of Dominicans would lose jobs in the cane fields and sugar mills. In these dark days for Haitians in the Dominican Republic, it is particularly unfortunate that she does not give more careful consideration to how Haitian immigration affects employment and income levels in the Dominican countryside. It is the responsibility of Haitianists and Dominicanists to bring into question common wisdom which impedes greater understanding between the two nations.

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RUNDOWN

Our 1993 rundown of books that have not, for one reason or another, been reviewed in the *NWIG* follows the culinary metaphors of its precedents, "Caribbean pepper-pot" (*NWIG* 58:89-98) and "Callaloo" (*NWIG* 66:95-99). Cassidy & Le Page's *Dictionary of Jamaican English* (Cambridge University Press, 1967) offers, s.v. *rundown*:

A kind of sauce made by boiling coconut down till it becomes like custard (but stops short of becoming oil). In it may be cooked salt or pickled fish, banana, or other ingredients. It is served in a bowl in the middle of the table, into which one dips one's bread-kind. See *dip-and-come-back*.

Under "dip-and-come-back," we find thirty-six alternative terms for the dish, including: dip-and-fall-back, dip-and-shake-off, assistant, bread-fruit remedy, dip-dip, dividen-an-flabub, duck-and-shake-back, elbow-grease, frigasi, johnny run-down, kobijong, kuochi waata, malongkontong, mulgrave, pakassa, plaba, plomi, rege, round-the-road, stew-down, swimmer-down, tap-i-a-paas....

Jamaican recipes for fish rundown can be found in both Elisabeth Lambert Ortiz's *The Complete Book of Caribbean Cooking* (Lippincott, 1973) and Rosamund Grant's *Caribbean & African Cookery* (Virago, 1989); the latter also starts us on the trail of its historical roots by noting that "'Run-down' could have been taken to the Caribbean, from Indonesia by the Dutch. They have a similar dish called 'Rendang,' which has almost the same pronunciation." Charmaine Solomon's *The Complete Asian Cookbook* (McGraw-Hill, 1976) offers support for this hypothesis in the form of four *rendang* recipes (three from Indonesia, one from Malaysia) that all share the basic ingredient of Caribbean rundown – coconut milk cooked down to a thick sauce. And we were recently told of a related gastronomical

offering that reflects our postmodern condition: the Kuala Lumpur branch of McDonalds now features a hamburger with an especially spicy sauce, under the name of "McRendang."

A number of books have not, despite our best efforts (including reminder letters), been reviewed in these pages, because scholars who agreed to the task have simply added the books to their libraries (making it impossible for us to send them to alternative reviewers). However, like our eighteenth-century friend John Gabriel Stedman (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1790/1988:25), "so far from omitting publick or private transactions," we are "fully determined to insert both the one and the other, that is with initial Letters," and hence we note such works, with the initials of their delinquent reviewers, as a kind of backlist "books received." (This list is accurate as of early January 1993, our press date. We as editors, as well as readers of the journal and the authors themselves, would welcome the submission of these reviews, however tardy.) *History of Religions in the Caribbean*, by Dale Bisnauth (Kingston, Jamaica: Kingston Publishers, 1990, n.p.) [S.D.G.]; *Castro*, by Sebastian Balfour (London: Longman, 1990, paper £6.99) [G.L.]; *Las emigraciones dominicanas a Cuba (1795-1808)*, by Carlos Esteban Deive (Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1989, paper US\$ 5.00) [A.Y.]; *Volksmuziekinstrumenten, getuigen en resultaat van een interetnische samenleving: een organologische studie met betrekking tot Aruba, Bonaire en Curaçao*, by Jos Gansemans (Tervuren: Koninklijk Museum voor Midden-Afrika, 1989, BFR 1194) [R.V.R.]; *Reise nach Surinam: Pflanzen- und Landschaftsbilder der Louise von Panhuys, 1763-1844*, edited by Karin Görner, Klaus Dobat, & Helmut Burkhardt (Frankfurt am Main: Senckenbergische Bibliothek, 1991, paper DM 40.00) [M.L.]; *Dictionnaire wayâpi-français*, by Françoise Grenand (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989, paper FF 395.00) [M.D.]; *De betovering verbroken*, by Rosemarijn Hoefte (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Foris Publications, 1990, paper NLG 25.00) [J.B.]; *Pidgins and Creoles. Volume I: Theory and Structure. Volume II: Reference Survey*, by John Holm (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. I, 1988, cloth £ 35.00 or US\$ 59.50, paper £12.95 or US\$ 19.95, Vol. II, 1989, cloth £42.50 or US\$ 69.50, paper £17.50 or US\$ 24.95) [M.C.A.]; *Anancy in the Great House: Ways of Reading West Indian Fiction*, by Joyce Jonas (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1990, cloth US\$ 39.95) [E.B.]; *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850*, edited by Franklin W. Knight & Peggy K. Liss (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991, cloth US\$ 42.50) [L.J.]; *In Search of a Better Life: Perspectives on Migration from the Caribbean*, edited by Ransford W. Palmer (New York: Praeger, 1990, cloth US\$ 42.95) [K.C.]; *Vivir en Caimito*, by Fernando Picó (Río Piedras PR: Ediciones Huracán,

1989, paper US\$ 5.95) [C.R.F.]; *Capitalism and Socialism in Cuba: A Study of Dependency, Development and Underdevelopment*, by Patricia Ruffin (London: Macmillan, 1990, cloth £35.00) [P.J.B.]; *The Narrative of Liberation: Perspectives on Afro-Caribbean Literature, Popular Culture, and Politics*, by Patrick Taylor (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1989, cloth US\$ 29.95) [S.R.C.]; *Economic Adjustment Policies for Small Nations: Theory and Experience in the English-Speaking Caribbean*, by Delisle Worrell & Compton Bourne (New York: Praeger, 1989, cloth US\$ 47.95) [R.W.P.].

In a different spirit, we mention also two books whose reviewers passed away *in medias res*: *New World Soundings: Culture and Ideology in the Americas*, by Richard M. Morse (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, cloth US\$ 34.50), which was being reviewed by the late Gordon K. Lewis, and *Mass Media and the Caribbean*, edited by Stuart H. Surlin & Walter C. Soderlund (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1990, cloth US\$ 65.00, paper US\$ 30.00), which was being reviewed by the late Harold J. Lidin.

Continuing down our list of unreviewed books, one consistent gap is striking: those published in France. Over the past several years we have conducted an intensive campaign to secure review copies of relevant books published by Editions Caribéennes, L'Harmattan, Karthala, and other French houses; we have sent out a special French-language version of our standard letter of request, and even enlisted the advice and cooperation of a friend in Paris who now heads a government-sponsored program for the promotion of French books abroad. None of this has weakened the resolve of these publishers to keep their books under lock and key; our Parisian contact writes that "they are sceptical that reviews will actually be published in non-French journals," and we are therefore not in a position to bring them to the attention of *NWIG* readers. (Occasionally, the author of such a work kindly sends it to us for review, which explains the presence of a few French-published books in the pages of this journal.) In fairness, we should probably note that a much smaller number of books (perhaps two dozen) that we have requested from non-French publishers have also been denied *NWIG*.

Turning to works we have received that deserve brief mention, we begin with reference books. The World Bibliographical Series has recently been augmented by two slim volumes: *Montserrat*, by Riva Berleant-Schiller (Oxford: Clío Press, 1991, cloth £24.00), and *Turks & Caicos Islands*, by Paul G. Boulton (Oxford: Clío Press, 1991, cloth £19.00); both appear to be labors of love, and Berleant-Schiller's annotations contain particularly incisive evaluations of the sources. Brian Dyde's popular *Caribbean Companion: The A-Z Reference (A Handbook to the People, Places, Plants, Animals,*

Culture and Major Historical Events of the West Indies) (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1992, paper £4.50), despite its acknowledged anglophone and nautical biases, is a good read; with occasional exceptions – he's cantankerous on anything smacking of "superstition" – Dyde's varied entries are mostly on the mark. C.N. Dubelaar has compiled a pioneering *Bibliography of South American and Antillian Petroglyphs* (Amsterdam: Foundation for Scientific Research in the Caribbean Region, 1991, paper NLG 35.00) that contains over 2200 unannotated references. And, in a related vein, P. Wagenaar Hummelinck has published *De rotstekeningen van Bonaire en Curaçao / The Prehistoric Rock Drawings of Bonaire and Curaçao* (Utrecht: Uitgeverij Presse-Papier, 1992, paper NLG 63.00), a companion, in the same dual-language, heavily illustrated format, to its sister volume about Aruban petroglyphs, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

The seventh volume of *The Cambridge History of Latin America*, edited by Leslie Bethell, is subtitled "Latin America since 1930: Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean" (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, cloth US\$ 99.95) and contains substantive overview essays by Louis A. Pérez on pre-Revolutionary Cuba, Jorge Domínguez on Cuba since 1959, Frank Moya Pons on the Dominican Republic, David Nicholls on Haiti, and Robert W. Anderson on Puerto Rico. Afro-Americanists (whether linguists, historians, or anthropologists) may be interested in John T. Schneider's *Dictionary of African Borrowings in Brazilian Portuguese* (Hamburg: Helmut Buske, 1991, cloth DM 78.00), the culmination of many years of research on both sides of the South Atlantic. John Gray has compiled three other reference works that devote sections to the Caribbean. The first, *Ashe, Traditional Religion and Healing in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Diaspora: A Classified International Bibliography* (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1989, cloth US\$ 49.95), despite a praisesong of a preface by Robert Farris Thompson, is an unannotated country-by-country list of 6000 somewhat scattershot entries, though the idea's a fine one and deserves further development. The same goes for the other two, *Blacks in Film and Television: A Pan-African Bibliography of Films, Filmmakers, and Performers* (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1990, cloth US\$ 55.00) and *Black Theatre and Performance: A Pan-African Bibliography* (Westport CT: Greenwood, 1990, cloth US\$ 45.00), which pull together a number of widely dispersed references.

Macmillan Caribbean has been publishing a series of visitors' guides to individual islands that are, more often than not, a step above the usual tourist fare. Recent examples include *Jamaica: The Fairest Isle*, by Philip Sherlock & Barbara Preston (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1992, paper £6.95), *Dominica: Isle of Adventure*, by Lennox Honychurch (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1991, paper £4.95), *The Turks and Caicos Islands*:

Lands of Discovery, by Amelia Smithers (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990, paper £4.50), and *St. Kitts: Cradle of the Caribbean*, by Brian Dyde (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1989, paper £4.95). This same publisher is also producing another genre of tourist coffee-table book – *Barbados: Portrait of an Island*, by Dick Scoones (1990, cloth £14.95), *The Bahamas Rediscovered*, by Nicholas & Dragan Popov (1992, cloth £19.95); wider than they are tall and awash with color photos, these feature a smattering of history and often-striking images of Caribbean vernacular architecture, multicolored tropical fish, and bikini-clad white female bodies.

Three more serious works on local architecture, with a preservationist bent: *Treasures of Barbados*, by Henry S. Fraser (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990, cloth £14.95), is a popular but substantive illustrated survey, written by the president of the Barbados National Trust to accompany a series of television programs designed to raise consciousness about the built environment of the island; *The Barbados Garrison and its Buildings*, by Warren Alleyne & Jill Sheppard (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990, paper £3.50), is an informed guide to this set of colonial monuments; and *This Old House: A Collection of Drawings of Trinidad Homes*, by Gerald G. Watterson (Port of Spain: Paria, 1988, paper n.p.), presents some four dozen pen-and-ink sketches accompanied by brief historical annotations.

Several reprints of Caribbean classics deserve note: *Trinidad Carnival* (Port of Spain: Paria, 1988, paper n.p.) republishes the rich, illustrated double issue of *Caribbean Quarterly* (1956) devoted to Carnival, with a new introduction by Kim Johnson; *A Rada Community in Trinidad*, by Andrew Carr (Port of Spain: Paria, 1989, paper n.p.), makes available once again this pioneering study of Afro-Trinidadian religion; and *Dances of Haiti*, by Katherine Dunham (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies, UCLA, 1983, paper n.p.), is a revised version, with a new preface by the author, of her pre-war monograph, first published in Mexico and later in France (with a foreword by Claude Lévi-Strauss, translated here). Guy Endore's little-known 1934 novel of Haitian slavery and rebellion, *Babouk* (New York: Monthly Review, 1991, cloth US\$ 28.00, paper US\$ 9.00) has been resurrected with a fine historical afterword by David Barry Gaspar & Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and an acerbic little foreword by Jamaica Kincaid. *Pidgins and Creoles*, Loreto Todd's slim primer of 1974, has been reissued with light updating (London: Routledge, 1990, paper US\$ 17.95). And then there's a work of humor, first published in 1979: *Jamaica Holiday: The Secret Life of Queen Victoria. Her Majesty's Missing Diaries*, "edited and loyally illustrated" by Jonathan Routh (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1989, cloth £9.99), in which numerous paintings illustrate the queen's trials and triumphs in colonial Jamaica. Oh those English!

Three works of folklore scholarship have come our way. *Singing the Master: The Emergence of African American Culture in the Plantation South*, by Roger D. Abrahams (New York: Pantheon, 1992, cloth US\$ 25.00), focusing on the U.S., is a brilliant exploration of the harvest celebration of corn-shucking that allows him to situate much of African-American culture-building in the yard between the Big House and the slave quarters. *African Folktales with Foreign Analogues*, by the late May Augusta Klipple (New York: Garland, 1992, cloth US\$ 77.00), is an Aarne-Thompson tour de force, completed as an Indiana dissertation in 1938, and finally published here with a useful preface by Alan Dundes; despite its methodological limitations, it's a major resource for Caribbean folklorists. *Junkanoo: Festival of the Bahamas*, by E. Clement Bethel (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1991, paper £7.95), is an accessible, illustrated history of this celebration with focus on the first half of this century.

We have received several books written for a youthful audience. *Jenunu: légende wayana*, told by Alaepa (Twenke, 97370 Maripasoula, French Guiana: CAWAY, 1992, paper n.p.) is published in two versions, French and Wayana, with paintings by Wayana children. *Pirates of the West Indies*, by Clinton V. Black (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, cloth n.p.), offers chapters on the escapades of notorious pirates and appears to be pitched at a high school level. *The Truth about Columbus: A Subversively True Poster Book for a Dubiously Celebratory Occasion*, by James W. Loewen (New York: New Press, 1992, paper US\$ 12.95), debunks standard American history textbooks to raise questions for high school students and teachers. *The Lucayans*, by Sandra Riley & Alton Lowe (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1991, paper £7.95), is a self-described "fictionalized history On an unconscious level, you [the reader] will understand the symbols and archetypes," and to help you there are lots of paintings of Columbus and the naked souls who greeted him, apparently with upraised arms, executed in a style of Sunday school textbook realism that must be seen to be believed; where is Gérard Dépardieu when we need him?

Miscellanea, worthy of mention, beginning with some works on Suriname. Several courageous publications on the human rights situation have appeared: *Memre Moiwana* (Paramaribo: Moiwana'86 Mensenrechtenbureau Suriname, ca. 1990, paper NLG 10.00) documents the November 1986 murders of more than fifty unarmed Ndjuka civilians by a government military unit; *In Memoriam Herman Eddy Gooding* (Paramaribo: Moiwana'86 Mensenrechtenbureau Suriname, ca. 1992, paper NLG 9.50) analyzes the background and aftermath of the August 1990 murder, thirty meters from the office of Commander Bouterse, of the police inspector charged with investigating this incident; and *Mensenrechten 1991 Suriname* (Paramaribo:

Moiwana'86 Mensenrechtenorganisatie Suriname, 1992, paper NLG 20.00) provides a judicious overview of the human rights situation from 1980 to January 1992. *Gadu Buku* (Colorado Springs CO: International Bible Society, 1991, paper Sf 15.00), a complete Saramaccan translation of the New Testament, is the fruit of more than two decades of work under the leadership of the anonymous but indefatigable Summer Institute of Linguistics team of Naomi Glock and Catherine Rountree. The Dutch Reformed Church has published a rather superficial, multi-authored guide to the country's religions, *Suriname: land met veel gezichten* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1991, paper NLG 23.50). *Fotografie in Suriname 1839-1939 / Photography in Surinam 1839-1939* (Amsterdam: Fragment, 1990, paper NLG 40.00) is the catalogue of an important exhibition held at the Museum voor Volkenkunde in Rotterdam – serious scholarship and remarkable photographs. *Pinaren in het paradijs: Suriname na de onafhankelijkheid*, by Daniel Koning (Amsterdam: Fragment, 1991, paper NLG 39.90) is a predominantly somber black/white photo-essay based on three visits between 1982 and 1990. *Het gezags- en bestuursstelsel in het binnenland van Suriname*, by H.R.M. Libretto (Paramaribo: De West, 1990, paper Sf 16.00) is the publication of the author's 1983 master's thesis in the Law Faculty of the University of Suriname, outlining history and normative structures of government in the interior. *Verdronken land, verdwenen dorpen: de transmigratie van Saramaccaners in Suriname 1958-1964*, by Carlo Hoop (Alkmaar: Bewustzijn, 1991, paper NLG 32.50), based on fieldwork and archival study, is the first book-length treatment of the history and social consequences of the forced displacement of more than five thousand Maroons to create cheap electricity for the multinational aluminum industry. In "*De Bosnegers zijn gekomen!*" *Slavernij en rebellie in Suriname* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1992, paper NLG 34.90), Wim Hoogbergen reworks for the second time in two years his rich 1985 dissertation; based on the 1990 English abridgment of that Dutch text, this latest version is a bit snappier, and apparently intended for a more general Dutch-speaking public.

More miscellanea: *Foundations of a Movement: A Tribute to John La Rose on the Occasion of the 10th International Book Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books* (London: The John La Rose Tribute Committee, 1991, paper n.p.) includes homages by numerous literary figures, many from the Caribbean, who have participated in these annual activist and cultural gatherings. *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy: A Student Reader*, edited by Hilary Beckles & Verene Shepherd (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle, 1991, paper US\$ 19.50) reprints thirty-seven (mainly historical) scholarly articles in convenient form. The second volume of the late St. Clair Drake's *Black Folk Here and There* (Los Angeles: Center for Afro-American Studies,

UCLA, 1990, paper n.p.) continues the story from early Christian times, through the Muslim world, into the Medieval period and finally into seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Western Europe. Michel Fabre's *From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1991, cloth US\$ 35.95) focuses heavily on the U.S.-French connection, but speaks to the experience of many Caribbean writers as well. *How Far We Slaves Have Come!* (New York: Pathfinder, 1991, paper £5.25) reproduces the speeches of Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro, presented from the same platform in Matanzas in July 1991. *Dominican Republic: Beyond the Lighthouse*, by James Ferguson (London: Latin America Bureau, 1992, cloth £15.99, paper £5.99), is an *engagé*, snappily written introduction to the present-day realities of what the Dominican tourist board calls "the land Columbus loved best." Two moving, multi-authored, oral history documents, illustrated with period photographs, have come our way from the Caribbean diaspora: *The Caribbean at War: "British West Indians" in World War II* and *"Sorry, No Vacancies": Life Stories of Senior Citizens from the Caribbean* (London: Notting Dale Urban Studies Centre, 1992, paper £2.50 and £2, respectively). *The Mermaid Wakes: Paintings of a Caribbean Isle by Mr. Canute Caliste of Carriacou, Grenada* (London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1989, cloth £8.95) features captivating scenes of daily life (from whaling and cuadrilles to cricket and the killing of Maurice Bishop) by a self-taught artist. Finally, we have only now been sent Guillermo A. Baralt's *La Buena Vista 1833-1904: estancia de frutos menores, fábrica de harinas y hacienda cafetalera* (San Juan: Fideicomiso de Conservación de Puerto Rico, 1988, cloth US\$ 30.00), a visually attractive and scholarly study that, had we received it in more timely fashion, would have been sent out for normal review.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Hispaniola: Caribbean Chiefdoms in the Age of Columbus. SAMUEL M. WILSON. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990. xi + 170 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

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This recent ethnohistorical account of the last days of the native chiefdoms of the Caribbean is a welcome and serious addition to the current plethora of publications commemorating the Columbus Quincentennial, only too often from the pen of improvised Caribbeanists. Wilson presents himself as an exponent of the "narrative" approach to ethnohistorical events. This particular viewpoint is believed to be a superior "vehicle for relating causal explanation"; it is meant to provide a better account of the complexity of ethnohistorical facts than the usual "descriptive" approach favored in anthropology. Indeed, the book, which is based on an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (unavailable to me for comparison), consists essentially of three narratives of the last fateful four years of native Taino society (1494-98), on the island of Hispaniola, in the Greater Antilles. This first narrative covers the often told story of Columbus's progress through the Bahamas and his first-ever encounter with New World natives. The following two chapters/narratives attract more immediate interest, and reveal more ethnohistorical originality. The subject is the Spanish penetration of the rich and fertile Vega Real interior valley which Wilson emphasizes as a potentially important population center so far underrated or underestimated by

ethnohistorians. The region is the scene of the first organized hostilities between Europeans and Tainos which prompted a Spanish destructive expedition towards the Xaragua province, in the southeast of the island, and the last resistance there by the most powerful among native chiefs, Caonabo, Behechchio, and his sister Anacoana. In re-telling these events, Wilson espouses the rationalistic view of native behavior which allows for a mutual understanding between the two parties within their respective value frameworks. Indeed, mutuality is a recurring theme in the work; the contact phenomenon itself is envisaged as a "mutual rediscovery" since the original separation from the Old World at least 12,000 years ago. This is perhaps stretching collective memory beyond reasonable limits, but the assertion is at least evocative of a common human lineage.

Wilson makes much of the mutuality involved between the respective elites. This is well illustrated in the exchange of prestige goods between Spanish leaders and Taino rulers who follow native protocol and ceremonial practices, thereby revealing the degree of understanding and acceptance of the Taino viewpoint towards those unanticipated intruders. In this context, the ethnographic present often associated with early historic Taino culture and society is approached with more flexibility. What the Spaniards encountered were confederacies of regional polities maintained and created on the spur of circumstances by political alliances between chiefs strengthened by matrimonial exchanges. Accordingly, Wilson's reinterpretation of the controversial boundaries of the five major ethnohistorically known chiefdoms of Hispaniola is clever and innovative. Instead of well defined "provinces," the emphasis is placed on the rise of particular centers of higher population densities and strategic location, as illustrated in his Figure 2.

Much of our understanding of the disastrous events of the European contacts of the Greater Antilles which rapidly led to the extermination of the entire Taino population depends on a reliable demographic model for the eve of contacts. Specialists are still undecided between the several millions and the few thousands figures for Hispaniola alone. Although Wilson appears to sympathize with a lower, more conservative, estimate, he remains hesitant throughout the book; his conclusions would have benefited from a more precise position on this issue.

If indeed the necessary archaeological verification of these demographic theories remains to be done, the archaeological background to Taino society has now been more extensively, albeit still incompletely, worked out. The issue could have been more directly relevant to assessing the degree of dynamism prevailing in Taino society and Wilson's well documented introductory chapter on Taino prehistory still fails to clarify a complex situation. The "ethnographic present" which is challenged in the ethnohistorical

accounts remains unquestioned for the prehistoric context. For instance, the Taino's culture is known to have existed in the Greater Antilles for at least three hundred years prior to the coming of the Europeans. Many of their monuments could well have been built at various times during these centuries, and even before; for this reason, I would have wished more prudence in the correlation of major ball court archaeological sites with historical chiefly villages or towns. Indeed, the evidence can be used to assume that considerable cultural and societal changes had occurred between the overall picture revealed in the archaeology and the situation encountered by Columbus.

It is essentially the ethnohistorical evidence proper which provides Wilson with his major facts. The basic sources are fully reviewed in another introductory chapter; they consist essentially of the Columbus diaries preserved by Las Casas and Ferdinand Colon, and of Las Casas's eye-witness accounts of later events, as well as an occasional reference to Dr. Chanca (certainly a major source) and Belzoni. I don't fully understand, however, why Wilson almost totally ignores Oviedo, whose accounts are also often based on actual eye witnesses only a few years after the events had taken place. Oviedo's notorious negative attitude towards the natives must certainly be acknowledged, but it should not deter historians from using this unique documentation in an objective manner. Events especially relating to chief Caonabo and the Vega Real rebellion are thus omitted or ignored. All in all, Wilson's book may be only a prelude to an ethnohistorical career that already promises to bring the ethnohistory of the Taino "into the 1990s," certainly at least to the standards now achieved in other parts of the New World, such as the Northeast. Wilson's combination of style and perception in dealing with these events lets us hope for a substantial contribution on so many misunderstood or simply ignored aspects of these first victims of the European contacts.

Death by Migration: Europe's Encounter with the Tropical World in the Nineteenth Century. PHILIP D. CURTIN. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. xviii + 251 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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Besides economic and political consequences, nineteenth-century European expansion into the tropical world had demographic consequences – for Europeans. In *The Image of Africa* (1964) Philip Curtin discussed how the high mortality among imperial servants earned Africa the reputation of “the White Man’s Grave.” In *Death by Migration* Curtin again takes up the subject of European mortality in the tropics. In this work, however, he concentrates on the relocation costs, that is the difference between European mortality in the periphery and in the center. Through an analysis of the mortality returns for military personnel in British India, the West Indies, and French Algeria, Curtin reveals the costs and benefits of European expansion.

Curtin’s use of the mortality experience of Europe as a benchmark for the tropical periphery is a resourceful demographic tool. Without it, the possibility of evaluating the significance of European contact with the tropics would be significantly diminished. British and French possessions registered reductions in mid-century, the 1890s, and 1909-19. During the intervening years – from the 1870s to the 1890s – Europe’s reductions exceeded those of the periphery, largely because of the decline in tuberculosis deaths.

Disease patterns in the tropics exhibited both change and continuity. Since malaria was rare in France, the initial relocation costs in Algeria were high, but they improved by the early twentieth century. The relocation benefits in the West Indies for tuberculosis, i.e. fewer relative deaths than in Britain, peaked in the third quarter of the century and declined by the twentieth century. In India, gastrointestinal deaths remained a constant agent of mortality throughout the century.

The most challenging and valuable dimension of historical demography is explaining the casual factor(s) for statistical trends. Here Curtin’s analysis of the decline in European mortality in the tropics advances our understanding only modestly. It falters partly due to the nature of the evidence and partly due to the absence of primary research.

Curtin attributes the decline in mortality to advances in public health strategies. It would be difficult to specify one causal factor or more for the

decline of specific diseases. Since nineteenth-century disease classification freely commingled causes and symptoms, designating disease itself becomes a problematic enterprise. "Fever" was a portmanteau category for most of the nineteenth century. In the tropics fever *may* have referred to malaria or yellow fever, but as a symptom rather than a cause it could just as easily have referred to the common cold.

Multi-purpose public health measures, such as filtering water and relocating to higher altitudes, *may* have reduced deaths due to gastrointestinal diseases and malaria. But this explanation requires at least one rather large assumption – that the categories of diseases employed by Victorians correspond to our own. This assumption is critical for Curtin's explanation of decline. In spite of the absence of primary research, he relates the decline of deaths due to certain diseases to modern epidemiological thinking, such as the vectors of malaria, or the notion of convergence, i.e. changes in disease patterns after prolonged contact.

To be sure, *Death by Migration* is not a work in the social history of medicine, nor does its author pretend it to be. Nor is it likely that a social history of medicine would accelerate the production of a more complete demographic record of Europeans in the tropics. Nonetheless, it would enrich our understanding of medicine in the imperial/colonial context to know *why* certain public health measures were deemed useful to adopt in British India, the West Indies, and Algeria, on what grounds their effectiveness was measured, and by *whom*.

Finally, statistics are not devoid of cultural meaning. Stephan Jay Gould demonstrated in his 1981 book, *The Mismeasurement of Man*, that the prejudices of nineteenth-century investigators into human development and race shaped – often unintentionally – the formulation and evaluation of experiments. In *Death by Migration* an opportunity was missed to explore how European perceptions of themselves and the tropics may have governed the entire process of statistical analysis. Curtin does plan to consider the "implications of comparative immunology for European colonial and military policy" in a future volume. But, this consideration of the statistical representation of life and death is incomplete. It implies that everything about the statistical project – except its applications – is objective.

The Sugar Cane Industry: An Historical Geography from its Origins to 1914.
J.H. GALLOWAY. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. xii + 266
pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.50)

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This fine addition to the Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography examines the diffusion of sugar cane cultivation, the transformation of productive techniques, and the sequential emergence of new centers of innovation under varying economic, cultural, and environmental conditions, beginning with the origins of sugar manufacture in ancient India and continuing up to the creation of a world-wide sugar industry in 1914.

The book is organized geographically and chronologically. After a brief introduction describing the origins of sugar cane, cane varieties, and climate and soil types amenable to its cultivation, the narrative gives an account of the first manufacture of crystalline sugar in northern India perhaps as early as the 7-4th century B.C. From this common origin, the author traces two paths of diffusion, eastward into China and westward to Persia, then through the Middle East, and into the Mediterranean. Although China became the second large area to adopt sugar as a cash crop, it did not replace other sweeteners, and, after its introduction, there was little innovation in its cultivation or manufacture. In contrast, the westward expansion of sugar from the Middle East to the Americas was characterized by the dynamic interaction of increasing scale and specialization of production, technical transformations of manufacture and cultivation, and the growth of markets.

For Galloway the decisive steps in the transformation of production processes were the application of irrigation to sugar cane cultivation by the Arabs in the early Middle Ages, European access to the abundant resources of the Americas after 1492, and the technological and scientific advances of the nineteenth century. The Arab conquests were important not only in spreading sugar throughout the Middle East, but in creating technical and political conditions that expanded and transformed production. Arab technology, especially irrigation, transformed cultivation and allowed intensification of land use, while conquest created political stability and an administrative framework that permitted specialized sugar production on a commercial scale. Growing European demand stimulated production throughout the Mediterranean beginning in the 11th century; by 1470 refineries in Venice, Bologna, and Antwerp had established a colonial relation-

ship between producer and dominant importer. Nonetheless, Arab techniques, small-scale production, and diverse patterns of land use and labor organization remained prevalent in the European Mediterranean.

As sugar spread from the Mediterranean to the Americas, the characteristics of plantation agriculture were increasingly accentuated. Although Galloway contends that the Mediterranean sugar industry formed "a school for the Americas," he argues against interpretations that would see the Americas as simply displacing the Mediterranean. The eastern Mediterranean sugar industry declined a century before the discovery of the Americas, while the western Mediterranean was expanding and only collapsed a century after Madeira began to produce. While the scale of production, technology, and patterns of land and labor use made Madeira and the Canaries extensions of the Mediterranean, the emergence in São Tomé and Hispaniola of large plantations using African slaves to produce cheap low-quality sugar for metropolitan refiners signalled the transition from Mediterranean polyculture to American sugar monoculture.

The decisive break with the Mediterranean pattern came in Brazil. There, ideal climate together with unlimited supplies of fuel, land, and servile labor not only resulted in larger scale operations but established the characteristic pattern of American plantation agriculture. Concomitant technical innovations in milling and boiling promoted large-scale production of cheap sugar for bourgeois consumers in Europe. This new model of plantation agriculture reached its highpoint in the Caribbean under the influence of the Dutch, English, and French. During the eighteenth century, rising demand stimulated by falling prices created a profitable but highly competitive sugar market. In the Caribbean, these conditions resulted in concentrated land ownership, intensive cultivation, heavy dependence upon slave labor, and the introduction of various innovations designed to reduce labor costs, improve yields, ameliorate manufacture, and mitigate the effects of deforestation and soil exhaustion.

In Galloway's view, this long-term pattern of sugar production that stretched from the Arab agricultural revolution to the eighteenth-century Caribbean was fundamentally transformed by the economic, technological, and social changes of the "long nineteenth century." Between 1790 and 1914, the changing world division of labor, industrialization, urbanization, and immigration led to the decline of the old sugar colonies. Slave emancipation throughout the hemisphere together with technical innovations in both agriculture and processing dramatically transformed conditions of production, while the emergence of beet sugar and continued expansion of cane sugar led to falling prices and the crisis of sugar.

Galloway argues that the need to replace labor under these new condi-

tions spread sugar throughout the tropical world. At the same time, he accounts for the ways that differing resources, capital, markets, and government policies produced varied patterns of response to the forces of change. The book concludes by examining the creation of modern sugar industries in Asia and the Indian and Pacific Ocean colonies. The incorporation and restructuring of sugar production in these regions by western imperialism closes the circle. Eastern and Western sugar were no longer independent of one another, but were parts of a unitary economic and political entity.

This book provides an historical geography of sugar cane that incorporates and synthesizes recent scholarship and is in many ways more useful (though less detailed) than such standard sources as Deerr and Von Lippmann. At times the author's emphasis on diffusion and the progressive technical transformation of each of the stages of cultivation and processing draws the analysis toward technological determinism and approaches a telological structure. Yet this very focus allows a well-written and lucid account of the emergence of sugar as a world crop, which also calls attention both to the unevenness in the pace and direction of change and to the diversity of local response.

Slavery in the Circuit of Sugar: Martinique and the World Economy, 1830-1848. DALE TOMICH. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990. xiv + 352 pp. (Cloth \$55.00)

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To the historiography of Martinique, Dale Tomich's book is essential. His work, which involved perusing archives extensively, contains an enormous amount of information. It is both serious and erudite. For once, Martinique escapes from the traditional analysis which usually considers the island only in relation with the "métropole," France. Here Martinique is put in an international, world-wide context.

Tomich also gives new insight into more general questions. He convincingly links the transfer of sugar production centers with political events and especially with the development of English hegemony (pp. 22-32). His detailed explanation of the sugar crisis compared to the rise of beet sugar in the colonial days of the nineteenth century and his description of the rise

and decline of pre-capitalist production against the triumph of European capitalism (pp. 61-75) are both sound.

Tomich's aim is to show "the ways in which the changing social-historical conditions of sugar production transformed the character of slave labor in Martinique, and, conversely, the ways in which slave relations of production shaped and constrained the development of sugar industry there" (p. 3). He insists on the distortion that appeared in the nineteenth century between slavery, an archaic form of labor, and the modernization of means of production, which required a qualified work force. Although the first period of "habitation" can survive with a poorly productive work force, the new modes of production do not allow it (pp. 218-19). Tomich shows how slaves form a social group. He insists on the slaves' resistance to changes and improvements in the production system (p. 245). This resistance is not due to an incapacity to use new methods of labor (p. 201), but to new elements which were not in their interests (pp. 279-80). The essential motor of the evolution in social relations and in the transformation of the slaves' work process is, according to Tomich, the granting of free Saturdays which they devoted to farming patches of land (p. 253). This practice has existed in Martinique since the eighteenth century even though laws repeatedly prohibited it on the grounds that it would have developed personal interests for the slaves. In addition to a relative freedom (symbolic and material) that benefited slaves, working on the land allowed the passage from proto-industrial slavery work to proto-peasantry freedom, in a process already described by Sidney W. Mintz.

The world economy, which would have destroyed slavery (p. 138), helps explain Martinique's history. Indeed, the main thesis is that the Exclusive System prevented Martinique from participating in the world economy (pp. 187-88). This led to archaic modes of sugar production, inhibited the renewal of methods, and encouraged passivity in the settlers (p. 203). Thus it led to the downfall of colonial sugar and the whole colonial system. In the nineteenth century, the world economy caught up with Martinique and unveiled differences in progress. Colonial sugar collapsed in competition with beet sugar, which was more modern and of better quality even when less protected. The colonies' crisis was one of modernity.

However, amidst this interesting demonstration, problems emerge in Tomich's theoretical model of analysis. Indeed, it seems that however much the world economy is essential for the analysis of grand scale movements, it does not allow us to understand smaller scale historical processes which are internal to society. Hierarchization of the slave society, which is accepted as an unproblematic fact, does not take into account examples given by Gabriel Debien. For example, on the *habitation* of L'Anse-à-l'Ane, on cen-

sus lists, the names of the *commandeur* and *commandeuse* are not singled out but simply included in the list amidst those of other slaves. This raises doubts about the strength of hierarchization of slaves on Martiniquan plantations.

Tomich is aware of this problem of play between scales of analysis, and attempts to solve it, but difficulties remain. The demonstration lacks internal links because of these constraints which are due to the fact that the question may be seen at different levels, from a sweeping point of view (the world economy) to a small one (Martinique slaves as a social group). These constraints provoke repetitions which are a necessity for demonstration of the chapter in progress – for example, explanation of the increase of cultivated lands in Martinique from 1828(?) after the protectionist policy of the French state for the colonies (pp. 78-79, 99, 106, 122, 140). The chapter “Anatomy of a Sugar Island” is too descriptive (even if it gives a great deal of information) and relates poorly to the book’s general argument. We get the impression that Tomich has applied a theory to a case study without raising the internal dynamics of the question.

La vie d'un colon à la Martinique au XIXe siècle. PIERRE DESSALLES. Présenté par HENRI DE FRÉMONT. Courbevoie: s.n., 1984-1988, four volumes, 1310 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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Pierre François Dieudonné Dessalles, Martiniquan sugar planter, wrote a *journal* of four volumes (ca. 1300 pages) for the period 1808 to 1857. Edited by Henri de Frémont, a descendant, the *journal* is generously provided with reproductions of the places and personalities that appear in Dessalles’s life. It is apparent from the content of the daily entries that he never intended it to be published. Fortunately for historians and anthropologists, Pierre Dessalles was a reflective and opinionated person. He did not limit his comments to the daily tasks of a planter such as sugar-making, consigning hogsheads of sugar, dealing with factors and creditors, and managing a labor force of 200 slaves. He interspersed his economic concerns with comments on the society around him (the slaves, the *gens de couleur libres*, the white creoles), the future of the colony, his own goals and family obligations, and

the standards, moral and utilitarian, he felt a white planter should uphold in this beautiful, bountiful, yet fragile island whose relations with France were slowly changing.

Many planter diaries of the ante-bellum American South have been published as well as a number of diaries of British planters in the West Indies (such as that of Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica), but there are almost no other published diaries of French planters. Dessalles's *journal* offers an opportunity to compare the attitudes of a French planter with those of an American or British one. Indeed, Dessalles's observations are profuse enough to constitute an "ideology," one that slowly evolved over his half-century in Martinique. To be sure, without corroborative evidence from other sources, we are prisoners of Dessalles's world view, but he is sufficiently unguarded in describing his own behavior and that of others around him to permit reasonable assessments about the island society as a whole. Moreover, the fact that the diary records the crisis of 1848 and slave emancipation is of special interest because it tells us how white planters like Dessalles accommodated to the change and what the limits of revolution were.

We may debate whether Dessalles practiced a "paternalism" that permitted his slaves some space to build their own lives, as Eugene Genovese argues in *Roll, Jordon, Roll*. But it is incontestable that Dessalles possessed a cluster of beliefs which helped him see himself as a person of integrity and principle. One might identify four elements of his ideology: defense of the Bourbon Monarchy as the only legitimate government; Catholicism as a source of his own moral superiority, as a social discipline for his slaves, and as a badge of "civilization" that should be granted only sparingly to the growing population of freedmen of color; a code of conduct that observed the "proprieties" (*convenances*), especially the strict separation of whites and *gens de couleur libres*. Finally, Dessalles saw himself as a paternal master of his slaves, "firm but just."

Here the Dessalles diary can help us discern whether his behavior conformed to a paternalist ideology that had some elements of benevolence and protection as well as stern authority. Although Dessalles objected to his son pushing the slaves too hard (arguing that eighteen minutes for lunch was not enough) and although he demonstrated regular attention to their food and health, he was completely perplexed by their abortions, suicides, laziness, languor, and despair. He said he could never reach the "bottom of the bag," even in dealing with his most zealous slaves. Dessalles denied to his friends in France that the whip was used in Martinique, but it is clear from the diary that he and his manager used it often. In fact, he wrote to the governor of the island in 1840 that "the negro race is so uncivilizable, so lazy, that it would be completely impossible to obtain the least work from them without the fear of some punishment" (II, 350, May 15, 1840).

Dessalles's views of the freedmen of color were more venomous because he considered the "*canaille*" to be pretentious and even threatening, especially since their numbers were increasing rapidly. Dessalles was especially shocked by what he called "*caraïbisme*," self-indulgence in general, miscegenation in particular. He was revolted by the sexual habits of his white creole friends who were "surrounded by their *mulâtresses* and their bastards" (II, 77, November 30, 1837). Racial mixing was not only vulgar and a breakdown in the separate functions of each "class" in Martinique, but also "illegitimate" in a deeper sense of contamination and moral degeneracy. Yet one detects a slow evolution of Dessalles's racial views, leading to a begrudging acceptance of full civil rights for the people of color in 1848, an "alliance of convenience," to be sure.

For forty years, Dessalles lamented the coming end of the colonies due to English agents and the contamination of the "philosophic sect" (the abolitionists), and the temporizing of the French administration since 1830. Yet that "end" was very slow in coming and when emancipation was declared by the Second French Republic in 1848, it did not lead to another Haitian Revolution. Dessalles learned, with the encouragement of his son, Adrien, to accommodate the people of color and to form a tacit alliance that would maintain labor discipline among the new freedmen.

The aging planter saw merit in Cyrille Bisette, the prominent mulatto abolitionist and a leader of the new freedmen. At a patriotic banquet Bisette chastized the black freedmen in attendance for eating with a certain abandon.

What are you doing my friends? You behave like cannibals, like savages! The more I try to raise you up, the more you lower yourselves. You make me ashamed. Am I not a negro like you? Then do as I do. Imitate the Whites! Only they will civilize you. Do not imitate the mulattoes. What use is the drum? Don't you see what the Whites use for their dances? Like them, use the violin. Then my daughters and I will come to your dances (IV, 151, December 4, 1849).

Pierre Dieudonné Dessalles spent his last years on his plantation at Sainte-Marie overlooking the Atlantic. The flag that continued to wave over the governor's mansion at Fort-Royal was not the fleur-de-lis, to be sure, but it was not the flag of Henri Christophe either.

The Old Village and the Great House: An Archaeological and Historical Examination of Drax Hall Plantation, St Ann's Bay, Jamaica. DOUGLAS V. ARMSTRONG. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990. xiii + 393 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.95)

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In a review of the archaeological and historical project on a Barbados slave plantation (Newton) conducted by Jerome Handler and Frederick Lange, I stated that as a result of the shortage of extensive literary records for individual slave plantations, archaeological surveys that by necessity rely upon such documents are likely to be rare in future. That was said a decade ago. This archaeological and historical examination of Drax Hall plantation in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica, appearing twelve years after that by Handler and Lange, is the second major work of this kind published on an English slave plantation.

Unlike Handler and Lange who focused their archaeological research upon the mortal remains of slaves, Armstrong is concerned with their consumptive and domestic remains. He does not go into the graves of slaves in order to find evidence of how they lived; rather, he goes into the remains of their homes in search for clues about a material and social existence not satisfactorily illustrated by plantocentric documentation.

Armstrong's thesis is stated quite clearly. He believes that by examining the archaeological evidence in conjunction with the historical data it is possible to obtain a "first hand record of the lives of slaves and of the emergence of an Afro-Jamaican community" (p. 1). Since the numerous accounts of slavery were not written by the slaves themselves, and are therefore problematic in writing a history from below, the archaeological evidence – site artifacts, structural remains, and dietary refuse deposits – when combined with the scribal data "provides a reflection of slave life and is a set of primary data with which to explore Afro-Jamaican transformation."

Convinced of the validity of this perspective, Armstrong proceeded to explore the remains of the "Old Village" slave settlement – the "only" real world made by slaves and shaped by their concepts of domestic and social formation. In the living and working space of the slaves' domesticity, Armstrong found evidence of the standard and quality of their nutrition and the nature of their social life. It is a fascinating study that identifies a number of socio-economic characteristics of the slave system, including those outside

of the slaves' orbit, such as the high import content of domestic goods, both for consumptive and constructive purposes.

It is not always clear, however, how Armstrong established links between the surprisingly low proportion of African artifacts found and statements about the rapidity of slave creolization on the estate. Neither is it clear how the origins of certain artifacts are established, and this in turn leaves unanswered a number of questions about the "enculturation" process within the "ancestral tradition." On this score, it seems to me that the author would have benefited by acting on his own advice, that the study of the material remains left behind by African slaves must be informed by a clear understanding of West African communities and the internal relationships between all sectors of West African society.

It is comforting for Caribbean historians, nonetheless, to learn from Armstrong that the archaeological evidence and historical documents complement each other, especially with respect to matters such as the dimensions of slave quarters, the spatial arrangements of villages, and the materials used in the construction of their homes. One implication that can be drawn is that if the plantocentric documents are correct on the subject of the slaves' material domesticity, they might also be reliable in other areas, a fascinating position if adopted at this time from the point of view of historiographic content analysis.

This book is impressive simply because of the evidence presented about the slaves' material life. Its methodological claims are important also from this point of view. Its historiographical contribution is more limited in that it does not seek to tell us new things, but sets out to confirm old things and give them greater validation by expanding a wider range of supportive evidence.

Less convincing, however, is the argument that the study of slaves' material remains can bring us closer to an understanding of their "inner worlds" and make them less invisible as social beings. It can also be stated that the evidence pertaining to slaves' material remains tells us more about the nature of the plantation as an economic enterprise than about the slaves as ideological and cultural persons resisting material victimization and trying to survive within the context of persistent malnutrition and economic marginalization. The record of domestic remains might reflect the structures of the imposed outer worlds of slaves rather than suggest the parameters of their inner worlds. After all, how much freedom did slaves possess with respect to the material ordering of their environment, and how much of themselves was manifested in such expressions? This is a central problem faced by studies of this methodological nature, and it is here that their importance might very well be tested most rigorously.

Caribbean Popular Culture. JOHN A. LENT (ed.). Bowling Green OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1990. 157 pp. (Cloth US\$ 26.95, Paper US\$ 13.95)

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This collection of ten essays is presented as an introduction to the formal study of popular culture in the Caribbean. In the opening essay the editor offers various reasons for the underdevelopment of this field of study, and delineates what has so far been done in a summary review of representative serial and other publications that treat Caribbean popular culture generally, and four topics – carnival, music, film, and sports – specifically. Publications on dance are conspicuously missing from this review, but the list of contemporary works is extensive and useful.

Following the introductory essay are three papers on carnival. In his lucid style Frank Manning analyzes the significance of the Caribbean carnivals in Toronto, London, and Brooklyn as an important practice in the integration-without-assimilation posture adopted by Caribbean migrants in these metropolitan centers. Manning's work is well-informed, and usefully sensitive to the social and political dimensions of carnival in these situations. In her paper on carnival in Antigua, Inga Treitler calls attention to the festival as a field in which opposing ideologies confront each other, as Antiguan go through a transitional phase with respect to their national culture. Klaus de Albuquerque links recent economic development of the U.S. Virgin Islands with an intense and powerful white presence bringing with it cultural preferences that contravene those of the local Islanders. The rapid empowering of whites and a consequent decline in local culture can be seen in the carnival, which has gone from being a celebration of Virgin Islanders' cultural identity to a contested field in which "old-time" traditions are being displaced by the new commercial and tourist-oriented fete. This transformation, the essay warns, may be costly.

There are three essays on radio and popular music in Jamaica. Marlene Cuthbert and Gladstone Wilson describe the situation in which the exploitation experienced by local Jamaican musicians – because of corruption in the recording industry – threatens the growth of a locally composed and performed repertoire. In a second essay Wilson highlights the role of music in Jamaican political culture. He sees popular music as a vital expression of the black Jamaican masses, and therefore a powerful factor in determining

the outcome of national elections. Maisha Hazzard and Vibert Cambridge describe the practice and results of an applied formula in radio dramas adapted by the Jamaican writer Elaine Perkins. Targetting her audience, and creating characters with whom her audience could identify are specified as potent techniques through which the writer was able to get Jamaican mass audience to consider and respond to certain social practices important in Jamaican life and culture.

In two essays on the French West Indies Alvina Ruprecht discusses the social and political function of a popular radio station in Guadeloupe, and Jocelyne Guilbault considers the form and significance of zouk, a popular creole music, as a potentially major factor in the cultural integration of the region. In the final essay of the collection Joan and Jay Mandle make the claim that, based on the evidence they garnered doing research on grass roots basketball in Trinidad and Tobago, borrowed popular culture may be a source of new and desirable patterns of activities where adaptation is marked by local creative impulse.

This is a curious collection, sufficiently skewed in its representativeness to suggest that it was brought together less around the formation of Caribbean popular culture than the going interests of this particular set of authors, who are grounded in different fields themselves – social-cultural anthropology, communications, ethnomusicology, sociology, French, economics, and journalism. The analytical territory staked out as the central concern of the collection – “Caribbean popular culture” – takes its orientation not from any grand theory within the field of popular culture, or from any new assertion with respect to Caribbean culture, but from a pattern of well-worn themes – cultural imperialism, cultural adaptation, political resistance, developmental strategies, class exploitation – that are all aspects of political culture.

In fact, the main weakness of the text is that the theoretical or ethnological formation and articulation of popular culture, or Caribbean culture – two sizeable comprehensives – is not addressed in any of the papers. They present – in most cases quite interestingly – the formation and content of particular instances of popular culture, and the work of deducing what the particularities say about the Caribbean or popular culture in general is left to the reader.

While to the contributors' credit, the essays are finely sensitive to issues of asymmetrical power systems that mark both class relations within Caribbean societies and relations between Caribbean societies and the northern metropolises, the configuration of the text takes shape from concerns that may be more useful as accessual orthodoxies than as the centerpiece of what's going on with popular culture. As has ever been the case historically,

in contemporary Caribbean societies, simultaneously with the wobbling of formal political and economic structures, people continue to rediscover themselves as cultural genitors, and popular culture is precisely the arena in which a refashioning of culture is being approached. There is a new interest in local history, and in the rediscovery of earlier forms of expression and cultural trend setters. There is the application of new technology in the elaboration of extant practices. One would have thought that the genius of the Caribbean people as cultural genitors and practitioners would have been at the center of a collection on Caribbean popular culture, but the circumstances of dependency and the deceptions or creativity by which such circumstance is met are the poles between which much of the work here is fashioned.

That said, it must be noted that although the level of achievement in the individual essays varies, they all deal with interesting contemporary situations. Anyone who has an interest in political developments in the region would be well advised to add this text to the reading list.

Democracy in Latin America: Visions and Realities. SUSANNE JONAS & NANCY STEIN (eds.). New York: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1990. viii + 224 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95, Paper US\$ 16.95)

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Courage was demanded of authors and editors of contemporary politics books published during the late 1980s and early 1990s – not only for writing on rapidly changing Eastern Europe but also for works on the Latin American countries addressed in this ten-chapter volume.

Nothing better illustrates the precipice of change on which this 1990 book is positioned than the erroneous prediction by Fidel Castro in an interview with Regino Díaz, editor of *Excelsior*, during the early stages of Perestroika. Responding to questioning regarding the economic crisis besetting geopolitical Latin America during the 1980s, Castro noted that

Cuba is now the only Latin American or Caribbean country that is immune to the crisis. Its foreign debt in convertible currency is minimal [and] we don't have any problems in our financial relations or in our trade with the ... socialist community – with which, as I have said, we have 85 percent of our foreign trade. (p. 140)

Despite the unanticipated demise of socialist solidarity, a good deal of Marxism, and Castro's misperception of Cuba's debt/trade position, this interview still forms a most relevant chapter, reflecting important analytical and predictive insights regarding what the Cuban leader discerned to be an unpayable regional debt. This chapter is followed by an interesting essay by Max Azicri on Cuban institutional borrowing during the 1970s from the then USSR. This essay includes an ideologically sympathetic discussion of Cuba's electoral system, plus the rationale for, and application of, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" with its Leninist-Stalinist prohibition of dissidence in the policy making/implementation process in Cuba.

The book's brief opening essay by Uruguayan Eduardo Galeno notes that "one out of every eighty Uruguayans had a hood pulled over his head, [and] invisible hoods covered the rest [of the nation] as well" (p. 7), partially as a result of inordinate socialist-bashing by U.S. and local elites – a policy led by Dan Mitrione, labeled by Galeno as a U.S. Professor of Torture Techniques. The lengthy chapter that follows, by Global Options associates (California) Susanne Jonas and Nancy Stein, delineates the progress of democratization in Nicaragua. This country, in the authors' opinion, made significant strides during the decade of Sandinista rule, with the 1984 general election especially noteworthy.

Next, Guatemalan Edelberto Torres-Rivas focuses primarily on Guatemala within the Central American context. This essay and Jonas's addendum-like chapter on Guatemala agree that the electoral-opening process in the country requires deepening through a return to the economic and social democracy incorporated in the Arbenz and Arévalo revolution which the CIA helped topple in 1954.

One of the volume's best chapters, a redemocratization essay by James Petras (SUNY Binghamton), focuses both on the models and on the negotiation stages for opening once authoritarian military regimes. The sad result, Petras warns, is often "a new cycle of democracy, instability, popular disaffection, increasing reliance on the military, and [eventually] a return to military rule" (p. 99). Certainly, part of this recycling of praetorian regimes is very much a game option in both littoral and Caribbean states during these times of declining economies.

Thus, it is appropriate that the next two chapters – an essay by the former rector of Mexico's national university, Pablo González Casanova, and the Castro interview by Díaz – deal directly with the region's debt crisis. Both view the current debt burden to be unpayable, unless severely discounted, "swapped," or otherwise negotiated. Following the chapter that focuses on the passage of Cuban government from charisma to institutionalization are two concluding essays on Hispaniola: one on Haiti by Haitian academician

Gerard Pierre-Charles, and one by University of Pittsburgh's José A. Moreno, which discusses in jargonistic terms the continuing dependency of the Dominican Republic. The former, written prior to the election of President Aristide, his subsequent ouster, and the migration crisis that has followed, is already dated, but offers a point for policy makers to ponder: that in the case of many Latin countries, and in Haiti most certainly, a majority of the population has little experience with anything approximating democracy, thus severely curbing the local appeal for political openness.

Democracy in Latin America is hardly the comprehensive treatment the title suggests. It devotes little attention to Latin America's major plural democracies, termed bourgeois democracies by Marxists. Instead the volume is primarily an uncritical review of the region's socialist systems and of democratizing efforts in selected recent or current authoritarian regimes. Its lack of ideological balance is more problematic. Many shortcomings of market and democratic pluralist systems are accurately noted, but where is the critique of the Castro and Sandinista regimes that this reviewer regularly heard when he conducted interviews/discussions in both countries during this same period? In both, one heard reports of positive public health and literacy programs – which are certainly better than in most of the region's pluralist systems – but simultaneously there was a genuine frustration, both sensed and articulated, concerning deprivation of civil liberties. Despite these problems, this is a useful work. It is recommended for large collections.

Storm Signals: Structural Adjustment and Development Alternatives in the Caribbean. KATHY MCAFEE. London: Zed Books, 1991. xii + 259 pp. (Cloth US\$ 40.00, Paper US\$ 15.00)

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Kathy McAfee's work is useful in highlighting how difficult economically the decade of the 1980s has been for the Caribbean. While the total foreign debt of the nations of the Caribbean is small (US\$ 21 billion in 1988) in comparison to the debt of Latin America excluding the Caribbean (US\$ 368 billion in 1988), the debt of the Caribbean as a percentage of the region's combined gross national product (GNP) is 79 percent, compared to 44 percent for Latin America. In the latter half of the 1980s, many Caribbean

countries were net exporters of capital. In 1987, for example, the Caribbean as a whole paid out US\$ 207 million more to the foreign governments, banks, and multilateral agencies that are "aiding" the region than was received from all of them combined in the same year. This net outflow of funds was mainly in the form of interest and principal payments on the region's foreign debt. The outflow of capital from the Caribbean would have been even greater had not a significant portion of the debt been rescheduled. Jamaica's debt payments, for example, have been rescheduled every year since 1979.

But of course rescheduling debt only leads to even higher bills in the future. While private bank lending declined and IMF lending slowed, the total foreign debt of the Caribbean grew by 125 percent between 1980 and 1988. The Caribbean's debt service ratio (its yearly debt bills as a percentage of its annual export earnings) has more than doubled during the same period.

McAfee shows that the cost of indebtedness has been fiscal austerity, decaying social services, and declining living standards. A host of statistics are quoted. In Jamaica, for example, real expenditures on social services were cut by 41 percent between 1975 and 1986. Concurrently, the share of government expenditure devoted to debt service climbed from 21 percent in 1980 to 44 percent in 1987. There is little doubt that economic difficulties have led to declines in welfare. For example, infant malnutrition, grade III, in one of the principal hospitals in Santo Domingo increased from 14 percent to 31 percent for admitted infants between 1977 and 1986.

But how can this sorry state of affairs, the "lost decade" of the 1980s, be explained? Does the reality behind these statistics portend, as the title of the book suggests, social upheaval? How can the region's small, open economies be put on a surer footing? McAfee is not helpful in answering these important questions. She only offers a diatribe, indicting US AID, the World Bank, and the IMF. Chapter headings and subheadings include, "US AID in the Caribbean: Do as We Say," "Capitalism and Democracy: A Terrible Mix," and "Dominica: The Plunder of Nature Isle."

McAfee is well meaning, but her analysis is reminiscent of the cruder forms of *dependencia* writing in the late 1960s and early 1970s, where a conspiracy was seen in the machinations of international capital. The Caribbean is seen as only providing, slavishly, commodities. Tourism, so important to the economies of the region, is scarcely mentioned, nor is reparation of wages from migrants and immigrants to the U.S., Canada, and Europe. Also absent from the discussion is mention of pressure on Caribbean economies from population growth, limited natural resources, and poor decision-making and corruption on the part of local officials. Indeed, there is no

inquiry into just what was done with the billions of dollars that the nations of the Caribbean so recently borrowed.

Given McAfee's narrow and polemical analysis of the region's economic problems, it is not surprising that her recommendations for how economies can be strengthened seem illusionary. For example, she suggests:

Enter into long-term arrangements that guarantee stable markets and prices for the region's exports. Such guarantees are essential during the period of diversification and transition from dependence on a few unprocessed commodity exports. Expand in Caribbean countries commodity stabilization funds which compensate Southern exporters for income losses resulting from declines in world market prices for these commodities.

Curiously, the view that the international economy is controlled by the wicked gives birth to the dream that the international economy can be controlled by the blessed.

Storm Signals charts how difficult the 1980s have been for the Caribbean. And it casts deserved skepticism on the ability of such touted solutions as the Caribbean Basin Initiative to solve trenchant economic difficulties. However, the book's analysis of the region's economies and their place in the world economy is simplistic and often misleading. Solutions for the Caribbean's economic difficulties, to the extent that they exist, will emerge only from more honest and searching analyses.

In the Shadows of the Sun: Caribbean Development Alternatives and U.S. Policy. CARMEN DIANA DEERE (Coordinator), PEGGY ANTROBUS, LYNNE BOLLES, EDWIN MELENDEZ, PETER PHILLIPS, MARCIA RIVERA & HELEN SAFA. Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1990. xvii + 246 pp. (Cloth US\$ 38.50, Paper US\$ 12.85)

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Studies of development strategies have become a blossoming genre in the literature on South and Central America and the Caribbean. The work in this literature has sought, alternatively, to outline and justify the neo-liberal adjustment strategies favored by the "Washington consensus," or to define a response that is cognizant of the demise of state-directed development solu-

tions, while being "realist" in accepting the economic and geo-political domination of the United States. The seven authors of *In the Shadows of the Sun* have joined the fray at this latter point; Carmen Diana Deere, as coordinator, is to be commended for fusing seven voices into one while presenting a seamless and impressive alternative to the IMF imposed liberalization agenda.

The volume is a political economy of political and social policy, and a tentative program for policy reform which is embedded in the historical evolution of Caribbean societies and the U.S.-regional relationship in the twentieth century. The eight chapters fall into four sections: Chapters 1 and 2 provide a brief overview of the region, and detail the origins and magnitude of the contemporary economic crisis. Chapters 3 and 4 present the impact of the crisis and structural adjustment on women and households, and the grassroots political response in the 1980s. Chapters 5 and 6 look at the historic relationship between the United States and the region, and the Reagan/Bush era embodiment of U.S. foreign policy in the Caribbean: the Caribbean Basin Initiative. The final chapters present a range of potential development alternatives for regional governments, and the U.S. foreign policy necessary for such efforts to work. Throughout, the presentation is lucid, statistical and historical information is comparative (treating Anglophone, Hispanic, and Francophone nations), and the marshalling of data and not easily accessible studies makes the work a potentially important tool for instruction.

The authors see several rays of hope in the hurricane of debt, austerity, and relentless marginalization in the Caribbean. While they argue that the crisis-induced expansion of the "informal sector" "hinders the development of a sense of collective struggle" (p. 11) and has led to a deepening of the crisis by "fragmentation of the working class" (p. 12), the authors argue in Chapter 4 that structural adjustment policies and the economic crisis itself are creating new organizations and movements that may contribute to the framing of new solutions (pp. 95-106). This discussion is an important contribution to the understanding of the political consequences of the crisis of the past 10-15 years. Local-level development organizations and NGOs are presented in contrast to the eroded power of the trade union movements and traditional political parties. The threat of cooptation and doubts about their capacity beyond the local level are identified, but these new bases of community organization are seen as channels for collective action and consciousness, empowerment, solidarity, mutual help, and the development of a sense of regionalism and internationalism (p. 104): a tall order indeed!

Perhaps the most compelling innovation of the work is the use of ethnographic vignettes, which convey the scale and impact of structural adjust-

ment on work and union organization, the blurring of intricate relationships between Caribbean migrants and their families who remain in the region, and the sheer struggle for human survival. All these rich "snapshots" deal with the experiences of women and the family unit: their productive and reproductive struggles and their organizational and individual strategies. These presentations support the concrete proposals recommended by Deere et al., outlined in Chapter 7. Here, development alternatives are outlined that center on women in the workplace, the informal economy, unions, community development, and ways in which closer attention to the question of gender by regional governments may lead to innovative definitions of "basic needs," equity, and educational and organizational strategies for reorienting domestic economies and politics (pp. 199-202). The economic crisis has opened a unique space for the use of gender by policy analysts and political activists to reshape the economic and political response to the emerging international division of labor in which the Caribbean is enmeshed.

Deere et al. propose a complex recipe for overcoming the contemporary crisis: Caribbean comparative advantage should be determined by high labor productivity instead of low wages; selective foreign investment; diversified exports; a cancellation of the debt; regional integration at the production level; diversified agriculture; and a continued reliance on import substitution and tourism (pp. 187-98). A prerequisite for success is to subject the state to "the logic of the majority," and "the democratization of power in society" (p. 199).

The work does raise a number of unanswered questions. The authors argue for increased U.S. assistance and a more favorable trade policy for the Caribbean on the grounds that the expansion of the Caribbean market is in U.S. economic interests; but given the history of U.S.-regional relations, the post-1980 pattern, and the international structural change undermining U.S. productivity and profitability, why would the United States adopt such a strategy? Deere and her colleagues can provide no convincing rationale for a shift in U.S. policy, and what is needed is a clearer argument to demonstrate why the United States would see it in its interests to change its strategy of flexible financial domination of the region. Second, the volume valorizes the emergent grass roots organizations in the region, but omits necessary considerations: how will these organizations fare in the highly partisan political atmosphere still dominated by traditional parties and elites? Are these organizations potentially conduits for the further incorporation of Caribbean communities into the market-directed order and ideology so lauded by the Washington consensus? The presentation lacks a clear picture of the consequences of the economic crisis for the traditional politi-

cal order, and a detailed look at the process of class formation (and deformation) taking place could have led the work to a new position on the feasibility of some of its concrete proposals. This point manifests itself in an absence of a discussion of the powerful social forces supporting the liberalization agenda *within* the Caribbean: a treatment of the longer run interests of political and economic actors and sectoral productivity could have helped pinpoint potential blockages to development alternatives and the junctures where successful coalitions of social forces oriented to pursuing such alternatives may form. Furthermore, this apparent blindness to the character of and vehicles for the exercise of power in the region leads the authors to argue that a deepened "democratization of the state" must come about: figuring out how to achieve this is probably a project in itself, but to make this claim without looking at the obstacles in its way is to raise more questions than answers. Ultimately, the volume repeatedly encounters but skirts the issue of the political will of regional states to enact policy alternatives, a consideration that must be confronted to produce plausible options.

The only glaring inaccuracy I detected is the claim that Michael Manley was elected prime minister of Jamaica in 1974 (p. 4); the absence of a bibliography made wading through the footnotes a chore. In spite of these minor shortcomings, and the silences outlined above, *In the Shadows of the Sun* is a useful and timely volume. Deere and her colleagues have placed a dynamic and innovative range of policy alternatives on the table in a format accessible to undergraduates and policy makers. We need to know much more, however, of the mechanics and practicalities of policy reform and enhanced democratization in the Caribbean.

Lords of the Mountain: Social Banditry and Peasant Protest in Cuba, 1878-1918. LOUIS A. PÉREZ, JR. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989. xvii + 267 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95)

Lawless Liberators, Political Banditry and Cuban Independence. ROSALIE SCHWARTZ. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1989. x + 297 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.50)

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The authors of these two books would have us read them as commentaries on, and to a certain extent “tests” of, Eric Hobsbawm’s analysis of social banditry. In Hobsbawm’s view, social banditry emerged from traditional peasant societies destabilized by an encroaching agrarian capitalism. Their predations could be seen as a response to and protest of the more dramatic predations of capitalist entrepreneurs, and the agrarian communities from which bandits arose, supported, and sheltered their activities and gangs. Do the bandits who roamed Cuba during the last two decades of the nineteenth century fit this model? In Pérez’s view, they do; according to Schwartz’s analysis, they do not.

As a debate, however, these two books are somewhat disappointing. Pérez’s book is not really about social banditry at all, although he asserts that the bandit gangs that operated in Cuba easily fit Hobsbawm’s model. More centrally, his book deals with Cuban economic transformations and social dislocations during the forty-year period 1878-1918 – the destruction caused by the Ten Years’ War, the expansion of sugar estates and displacement of small farmers in the center and west during the 1880s, the emergence of the east as a zone of refuge for small farmers, and especially for people of color, during the same period, the destructive effects of the War of Independence, the invasion of U.S. capital after 1898, the conversion of the east into a sugar plantation zone in the early twentieth century, and the displacement of small farmers during this period. For each period of expansion and displacement, he describes organized protest movements and lists bandits and bandit gangs that were active in the areas subject to disorganization and displacement. But a number of critical details are missing. Most importantly, Pérez provides little precise information on the bandits themselves and their social milieux, depending instead on a rough correlation between economic and social dislocation and the rise of bandit gangs.

In addition, his accounts of peasant agriculture and estate expansion alike are not fully satisfying. The former, aside from being traditional and prizing their autonomy and self-sufficiency, remain faceless; his description of the latter captures its dramatic extent and destructiveness and pays important attention to its regional character, but its microsociological dimensions (interactions between particular estates and particular villages of small producers, particular displacements, or particular small victories) are unexplored. These silences undermine an assertion that Cuba's brigands were social bandits in Hobsbawm's sense.

Rosalie Schwartz, in turn, treats bandit gangs operating in the 1880s (especially Manuel García's gang) with considerably more detail and less sympathy. She disagrees with Pérez on most points: she argues, importantly, that Cuban peasants were not a traditional social stratum with deep historical roots and associations but lived in villages and settlements of migrants, former slaves, estate workers, and the like; she contends that estate expansion did not fully displace small scale producers and that a vibrant internal market for a variety of food products thrived in the center and west; she explores the personal histories of a variety of bandits and disputes their peasant origins and associations. She finds significant rural support for the brigands, however – sometimes among village elites or estate holders, sometimes among sympathizers and supporters of the independence movement, sometimes among smallholders. Most importantly, she uncovers connections between some bandits (especially García) and exiled independence leaders who benefited from the bandits' destabilizing activities in the countryside and occasionally received stolen funds. While Schwartz rejects the model of social banditry for late nineteenth-century Cuba, then, she argues for a model of political banditry during the decade before the War of Independence.

Some of these arguments need to be regarded with skepticism. For one thing, much of the detail is misplaced. Schwartz vividly imagines the actual scenes and events of certain robberies, ambushes, and battles but provides less economic, social, and political analysis than one might have wished. For example, while she notes that the rural economy was considerably more complex than would be supposed by a model postulating an opposition between sugar estates and peasant villages, she does not pursue the sort of social and political analysis of rural class relations that would allow us to understand the fields of power in which smallholders and other rural folk lived. As we approach such an understanding, the line between "social" and "political" banditry may be more difficult to draw. Her difficulty in pursuing a more detailed economic and social analysis may be due, in part, to her sources. While Pérez drew upon a variety of archival, manuscript, and jour-

nalistic sources in Cuba and the United States, Schwartz depended on colonial manuscript and archival sources in Spain, especially the Polavieja Collection. Hers are the records of a police action and counterinsurgency campaign, with all the strengths and weaknesses that such records necessarily contain.

Neither author chose to use the important Cuban experience to deepen or extend Hobsbawm's original insights regarding the social and political contexts for banditry. In its most simple versions, the mode suffers in its understanding of both peasant tradition and capitalism. With its not-so-traditional peasantry, its historically particular form of capitalist expansion, and its well documented history of banditry, Cuba provides material for a more complex and satisfying interpretation. For this, however, we need less debate and more dialogue.

Cuba in the 1850s: Through the Lens of Charles DeForest Fredricks. ROBERT M. LEVINE. Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1990. xv + 86 pp. (Cloth US\$ 22.95)

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Interest in early photographs as historical documents has surged in recent years. With this volume Robert M. Levine, a distinguished historian of Brazil, continues his pathbreaking study of the history of early photography in Latin America. He reproduces from the collection of H.L. Hoffenberg of New York City more than thirty rare photographs of Cuba in the mid-nineteenth century. Few outdoor photographs of American places predate 1860; these may be the oldest outdoor photographs of Cuba in existence. They derive from Charles DeForest Fredricks, a highly successful commercial photographer. Fredricks traveled extensively in Latin America and by 1860 had branched out from headquarters in his native New York City to establish studios in Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba.

Levine correctly warns his audience to handle these photographs with care. By themselves, they distort more than they reveal about mid-nineteenth century Cuba. Fredricks operated within a variety of constraints. His lenses, for example, failed to capture movement. Cameramen had to avoid or even prevent activity to get a clearer picture. Subjects had to be posed, in

ways that deferred not only to the lenses but to convention as well. Costly and delicate equipment made transportation risky. Little wonder that Fredricks took the majority of these photographs in or near Havana where he had his studio. Costs also forced Fredricks to deal with a largely affluent clientele. Their preferences tended to yield favorable pictures of Cuba. Thus, the answer to Levine's rhetorical question about whether photographic images depict reality must surely be no. Cameras, like the human mind, filter bits and pieces of reality; they never take in its totality.

Fredricks's photographs convey that sense of order and progress so familiar to students of nineteenth-century Latin American history. Havana harbor, invariably acclaimed by nineteenth-century visitors for its safety, capacity, beauty, and traffic, figures in seven of the photographs. Several of those that show the Havana waterfront from the eastern side of the harbor bear an uncanny resemblance to the earlier and now well-known lithographs of the French graphic artist Fredricks Mialhe. Famous buildings and landmarks in Havana occupy about a dozen photographs, four of which capture the Fuente de la India from different angles. Taken together, they speak of a triumphant Spanish past and a promising future. Photographs of the captain-general's palace or of the Puerto de Tierra, once a principal entrance through the walled part of Havana, convey a sense of control, permanence, and stately dignity. Photographs of Havana's wide thoroughfares or *paseos* and several of its grand hotels populated by festive tourists speak of the prosperity and material advancements befitting a country that at the time was one of the world's richest colonies. Yet only a few photographs point to the material basis of Cuba's elevation: sugar and slaves. The photograph of fashionable white ladies about to be pulled through Havana's streets in a magnificent chaise stands in sharp contrast to the current scholarship on slave life in the Cuban countryside. Only two photographs show a canefield. Free people of color approached about twenty percent of the total population at mid-century, concentrated in the cities, and dominated many skilled crafts and trades. The photographs provide barely a hint of their existence. One of the few photographs to halt a swell of generally positive feelings has a scarred black man (presumably a slave) posing in *el cepo*, the stocks. Levine provides a brief description of each photograph and to his credit squeezes more information from them than might be reasonably expected. Still, the photographic images grossly belie the reality.

Happily, the foreword by Louis A. Pérez, Jr. and the historical background chapter by Levine place the photographs in the needed context. Rather than order and progress, mid-nineteenth century Cuba displayed stark social inequality, political instability, and breakneck change. About a

decade before these photographs were taken, Spanish authorities brutally suppressed one of the largest movements of slave and free colored resistance in the history of the Americas, the so-called Conspiracy of la Escalera. Rising annexationist sentiment among slaveholders in the southern United States coupled with the fears of Africanization among white Cubans led to the notorious filibustering expeditions of Narciso López in the late 1840s and early 1850s. About a decade after these photographs were taken, Cuba's long struggle against Spanish rule took a decisive turn with the outbreak of the Ten Years' War.

Despite an occasional overgeneralization, Levine's informed encapsulization of the complexities of Cuban society at mid-century and of the forces that were driving change will reward most readers. Although in important ways Mialhe's lithographs offer more revealing and certainly more colorful visual images of mid-nineteenth-century Cuba, this handsome volume can rest comfortably on a scholar's bookshelf as well as on a coffee table.

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The Cuban Condition: Translation and Identity in Modern Cuban Literature. GUSTAVO PÉREZ FIRMAT. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. viii + 185 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.50)

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In his introduction to *The Cuban Condition*, Pérez Firmat examines Jorge Manach's insights into the culture and people of Cuba, particularly his notion that "the Cuban culture lacks 'style,' that is to say, a sense of cultural wholeness" (p. 11). Firmat disagrees, asserting that "[u]nlike Manach I do not believe that Cuban culture lacks 'style'... [Rather] Cuban style is translation style." In *The Cuban Condition* (p. 4), then, Firmat seeks a singular definition for the polyglot and often heterogeneous Cuban culture:

Because of the island's peculiar history, the Cuban writer or artist is specially sensitive to opportunities for translation in both the geographical and linguistic sense of the word... [N]ot having a native store of cultural goods, and conditioned by history to the ways of the transient rather than the settler, the Cuban writer has the habit of looking outward, of being on the lookout for opportunities for displacement graphic and topographic.

Essential to Firmat's argument, therefore, is his definition of translation (p. 4). He writes,

I used "translation" not only in the strict sense of recasting in a second language a statement from the first; my use of the term generally corresponds to what Roman Jakobson has called "intralingual translation," that is, a restatement or paraphrase that occurs within the matrix of a single language.

But the intralingual translation, according to Firmat, needs to "keep distance," to "have insular consciousness," and "not to have excessive contact with the outside world" (p. 3).

Firmat clearly identifies this central aim: "[T]he purpose of this book is ... to examine the specific ways in which the distance is achieved in an important group of twentieth-century writers and ... to explore how the insulation contributes to Cuba's cultural and literary self-definition" (p. 5). This self-definition is comprised of the "literary vernacular," the "nation language," and the "Cuban voice" (pp. 5-6). To explore these concerns, Firmat includes essays about Nicolás Guillén ("Nicolás Guillén's between the son and the sonnet" and "Mulatto Madrigals"), Eugenio Florit ("The Discourse of the Tropic"), Carlos Loveira ("The Creation of Juan Criollo"), and Alejo Carpentier ("Land or Language"), as well as an essay dedicated to Juan Marinello ("Shifting Ground"). But it is his three essays concerning Fernando Ortiz ("Mr. Cuba," "The Politics of Enchantment," and "Cuban Counterpoint") that constitute the heart of Firmat's argument.

Ortiz's example, writes Firmat, "favors all my subsequent analyses" because the concept of "transculturation" coined by Ortiz embodies the main characteristics of Cuban culture (p. 24). And even though this culture is composed of different elements, "they do not lose their original flavor and identity" (p. 24). Thus, the Cuban voice retains its strength and originality.

In "Mr. Cuba," through an elaborate analysis of Ortiz's *El Caballero encantado la moza esquivia* (an elaboration of the Spanish novelist Benito Pérez Galdós's *El caballero encantado*), Firmat considers the concept of intralingual translation and its concomitant textual distancing. In this intralingual translation, he asserts, Ortiz preserves the cultural independence of Cuba from corruption by Spain, Latin America, and the United States.

Firmat reinforces his argument by examining Ortiz's better known work,

Contrapunteo del tabaco y del azucar. In this work's struggle between sugar and tobacco interests, he suggests, Ortiz is recreating the dispute between Carnival and Lent found in the Arcipreste of Hita's *El libro del buen amor*. Again Firmat shows how Ortiz clears his literary ground, establishing the necessary "distance" that Marinello discusses in "Cubanismo and americanismo literario."

In his discussion of Juan Loveira's novel *Juan criollo*, Firmat continues his argument about Cuban writers' maintenance of literary "distance." He places *Juan criollo* in the picaresque tradition, finding echoes of Guzman de Alfarache and Lazarillo de Tormes. Ultimately, Firmat suggests that "like Ortiz, Loveira knows how to have his words and eat them too. Even as he takes his distance from his 'literary precedent,' he maintains it within his sights" (p. 125).

Similarly, Firmat argues that Nicolás Guillén establishes and maintains "distance" by using classical poetic forms such as "sonetos" and "madrigales." By looking at *El Abuelo*, however, he shows that this distance applies to all of Guillén's poems, not just his "sonetos" and "madrigales." "The subject of *El Abuelo*," writes Firmat, "is not blanching but coloration. Guillén adds color, 'Cuban color,' to the versos blancos (as it were) of the Petrarchan sonnet" (p. 73).

Firmat (p. 99) makes a nearly identical argument in his essay on the Cuban poet Eugenio Florit, maintaining that Florit's verses have a "double accent." In other words, they are "[o]riginal, not aboriginal." He adds,

[T]he language of Florit's opening also reveals that, even if these poems do contain the vox populi, this voice will be inflected by a foreign accent. Or better, that it will have a "double accent," to use the title of another of Florit's books – an accent at once native and foreign, homey and exotic. Florit's complicated diction and elegant vocabulary immediately distances these poems from nativist verse.

The remainder of *The Cuban Condition* continues this concern with the attempt to define a national literature that exists always in the tension between literary subversion and cooptation. Firmat closes his collection with mention of Alejo Carpentier's *Los pasos perdidos*: "For Carpentier's protagonist, as for me, the congenial inconsistency of Cuban criollism, indeed the congenial inconsistency of Cuban culture, culminates in a linguistic antimony, in a painful but productive indecision between the mother tongue and the other tongue" (p. 157).

The Cuban Condition is an ambitious interpretation of Cuban culture. Nonetheless, Firmat's argument is marred by an excessive erudition. At times, his ideas seem more like the creations of a great intellect than the genuine characteristics of Cuban culture. However, there is much of value

here. The book's ideas on Cuban "vivo," for example are extraordinarily illuminating. Ultimately, *The Cuban Condition* should be read by any scholar interested in Cuban culture; it is the rigorous and honest inquiry of a Cuban-American scholar into the deepest rivers of his being – the Cuban culture.

The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution: An Empire of Liberty in an Age of National Liberation. JULES R. BENJAMIN. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990. xi + 235 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95)

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Imperial power naturally generates its ideological justification, almost always in terms of some form of "civilizing mission." In the case of the European colonial powers, the traditional arguments were wearing remarkably thin after the Second World War. But the United States, product of the first major anti-colonial revolt and a persistent critic of European colonialism, could hardly be considered in the same terms, at least by her own leaders. American power was exercised in the name of "liberty," generally favored formal political independence, and was thus easily considered benign. The aggressive assertion of North American interests was understood as perfectly compatible with the best interests of those other countries which were to be found within the sphere of influence of the "free world."

For these reasons, the way in which the Cuban Revolution developed during the course of 1959 not only took the U.S. government by surprise; it represented a radical challenge to deeply-rooted assumptions underlying its entire foreign policy. In order to understand how Fidel Castro could have successfully defied the U.S. government in the name of Cuban nationalism, there were several explications which conveniently left the "imperial" ideology intact: Castro had "betrayed" a genuinely popular uprising against Batista, abandoning its original "democratic" program; on the basis of his "charismatic" influence over the masses, Castro had consolidated a totalitarian system which deprived the Cuban nation of any possibility of expressing its true sentiments and desires; and, finally, Castro had proved a mere instrument of Soviet foreign policy, a particularly dramatic demonstration of the permanent threat of communist expansionism.

These arguments not only left intact the comfortable assumptions about the benign nature of U.S. foreign policy; they also served to justify the subsequent attempts to overthrow the Cuban regime by any possible means. Finally, they made it possible to avoid the truly embarrassing fact that the nationalist revolt, which the United States had applauded when directed against the European colonial powers, had appeared in its own backyard and challenged the ever more pervasive North American influence, which was evidently considered far from "benign."

More than thirty years after the rupture between the United States and Cuba, Jules Benjamin has published a book that offers serious answers to many of the awkward questions which the Cuban Revolution ought to have provoked a long time ago. His basic concern is to analyze why the U.S. establishment was so ill-equipped to understand and respond adequately to the Cuban Revolution.

On the basis of an exhaustive review of the available sources, Benjamin demonstrates the falsity of the thesis that the decision to overthrow Castro was a consequence of Cuba's alignment with the Soviet Union and is merciless in his analysis of the attempts to topple the Cuban government. Nevertheless, the interest of Benjamin's book does not derive mainly from his detailed documentation of the ineptitude of U.S. policy; it resides in the way in which he develops the thesis that "the relationship between the United States and Cuba broke down under its own weight; it could no longer bear the burden placed upon it by the antagonism between the U.S. desire to influence Cuba and the Cuban desire to fulfil the dream of true independence" (p. 24).

This summary of Benjamin's central thesis evidently points toward an analysis of the history of U.S.-Cuban relations. It might even suggest a rather naive vision of a "comedy of errors." Nevertheless, the way in which the argument is developed is far from naive: "it is not ... a traditional diplomatic history. It attempts to uncover not only how the United States acted toward Cuba but also what deeper elements in North American institutions and culture directed the use of its power" (p. 3). Furthermore, it attempts to help us understand how the overwhelming U.S. influence in Cuba during the first half of the century culminated in a radical incapacity to understand the 1959 revolution.

In a few lines we can hardly do justice to the rich texture of the argument. We will simply indicate how Benjamin demonstrates that the basic problems were already implicit in the character of the U.S. intervention in the War of Independence at the outset of the century:

Washington eventually resigned itself to having its hegemony mediated by an elected Cuban government. What it never figured out was how to trust nationalistic officeholders or, alternatively, how to give moderate officeholders enough leeway to make them appear credible to Cuban voters. At a deeper level, Washington's problem was not simply that it had little confidence in Cuban leaders. It had removed the base from which autonomous leaders might arise... Thereafter, neither the government, the army, nor the economic elite could be effectively nationalist, while over the years nationalism came to reside in movements against the state, the military and the bourgeoisie. (pp. 67-68)

In short, this is an excellent book which offers a fresh look at one of the most controversial problems of twentieth-century U.S. history.

The Cuban Economy: Measurement and Analysis of Socialist Performance.
ANDREW ZIMBALIST & CLAES BRUNDENIUS. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989. xiv + 220 pp. (Cloth US\$ 38.00)

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This is a comprehensive book on the Cuban economy written for the specialist, but accessible for the most part to the interested generalist; for either, it is a valuable addition to the bookshelf. Zimbalist and Brundenius have produced a careful study, critically sympathetic, cogently argued and packed with useful material. Both authors are well known specialists in this field. As they point out, some of the material – the product of their many years of research – has appeared in article form, but much is new.

The book is in two parts; roughly the first third is devoted to translating Cuban economic aggregates compiled under the material product accounting conventions (MPS) used until recently by centrally planned economies into the United Nations' standard national accounting system (SNA). This material is largely for the specialist – fascinating, but requiring reasonable familiarity with the debate over Cuban statistics best summed up Jorge Salazar's phrase "Is the Cuban economy knowable?" Salazar doubted that it was, despite various studies on the growth and structure of GDP. One of the authors, Andrew Zimbalist, has expended much effort in recent years to improve these estimates. The first five chapters explore the methodological difficulties of using Cuban published sectoral indices, a proxy price structure, and purchasing power parity assumptions to reconstruct a consistent time-series for GDP in 1980 dollars. The results suggest that per capita GDP

rose from \$539 in 1958 to approximately \$2,500 in 1980 (\$2,323 or \$2,691 depending on the method of calculation), or by approximately 4 percent per annum before population growth – somewhat lower than the official Cuban estimate for the period of 5.1 percent, but higher than conceded by most other specialists. When compared with per capita GDP estimates for other countries measured on a similar basis, Cuba is on a par with Costa Rica and Chile, well ahead of Central America but below Brazil and Mexico.

The remaining two-thirds of the book rests mainly on the collaborative work of Zimbalist and Brundenius. Successive chapters cover capital goods, agriculture, incentives and planning, and the foreign sector (including aid and debt). These hundred or so pages contain one of the best accounts I have seen to date of Cuban development strategy and performance over the three decades since the Revolution. The broad argument can be paraphrased as follows: far from being an impressive welfare state but little else, Cuba is the only Latin American country which has managed *both* to build a genuine capital goods sector – with certain sub-sectors at the “technological frontier” such as computers and pharmaceuticals – *and* to have turned domestic terms of trade in agriculture’s favor while successfully diversifying exports. Moreover, the argument goes, Cuba did it from scratch, having inherited in 1958 a narrow, largely obsolescent agro-industrial base and a destitute rural population. Although support from the CMEA, particularly the sugar price subsidy and cheap oil, provided a cushion against changes in the world economic climate, this advantage provided no direct hard currency and was offset by the CMEA’s relative backwardness, Cuba’s lack of access to multilateral aid, and above all by the economic and technological isolation resulting from the U.S. embargo. In short, in terms of growth Cuba has matched the Latin American average, while in terms of economic structure, the basis for sustained industrial development has been laid. And in their concluding chapter, the authors correctly remind us that this pattern – equity through land reform, a highly educated population, and a technologically sophisticated industrial sector underpinned by a “developmental state” – is closer to the NIC model than to the rest of Latin America. At the same time, Cuba’s Achilles heel is acknowledged: its relatively poor trade performance, expressed in the delayed but growing debt crisis of mid-1980s, which ostensibly forced a reversion to greater central planning.

It seems probable that Zimbalist and Brundenius have written the final book on the Cuban economy set against the backdrop of the familiar bipolar world of the postwar era. Since the time of writing, Cuba’s situation has deteriorated dramatically following the collapse of the CMEA and the end of Soviet aid. With the benefit of hindsight, it is tempting to criticize the

authors for having paid insufficient attention to the perils of rigid central planning and doctrinal sclerosis. But such a criticism would miss a crucial point: Cuba's attempted modernization took place at the high point in the cold war when more liberal options were unavailable. Given the circumstances, what is surprising is that Cuba achieved so much, not so little. Nevertheless, as the authors appear to imply, *rectificación* marks the decisive juncture at which Cuba balked, rejecting further movement towards a mixed economy and political liberalization. Was this choice economically determined as the authors appear to believe, or merely Fidel's whim? Was there never a "Chinese" option of market economics without political change? And if – as appears increasingly probable – Cuba is doomed to slow economic strangulation, what is to be salvaged of the economic model? The authors' NIC analogy suggests a fruitful point of departure; one looks forward to more.

Managing Socialism: From Old Cadres to New Professionals in Revolutionary Cuba. FRANK T. FITZGERALD. New York: Praeger, 1990. xiv + 161 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95)

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Most analyses of the Cuban political system follow what in political science is called an elite-mass perspective. Parting from the observation that in Cuba things are basically managed by a small group of persons, studies have focused on this group's background and composition, and the relationship of the various factions to the revolutionary leadership, e.g. the Castro brothers. Studies of the way Fidel operates, including biographies like the one written by Tad Szulc, emphasize his leadership as charismatic with strong personalist and authoritarian features. No wonder – watching the tendency among Cuba's leaders to interfere with decision-making on virtually all levels of society – that among Cubanologists the influence of the elite-mass perspective has been so strong.

Fitzgerald takes a different approach. He draws attention to the influence of the intermediate levels of professionals and technicians and ascribes to them a vital influence in determining the way Cuban economy and society are being run. The "new professionals" trained under the flag of the revolu-

tion are a particularly relevant stratum. Out of the total number of intermediate level personnel present in Cuba in 1959, only about one-third were lost through emigration. The majority of them stayed. In subsequent years they were joined by the thousands and thousands of new technicians and bureaucrats that the Cuban educational system produced, and these are the ones whose orientations we should be looking at.

However, Fitzgerald's perspective appears to be no more grounded in empirical fact than the one he seeks to disprove. His study does not even make it more plausible. He was, like most researchers of Cuban affairs, condemned to a weak methodology and had to base his findings on flimsy evidence. Research on the island by outsiders is often not permitted by the Cuban authorities. Therefore, mostly secondary data sources had to be used. Among them, government publications and speeches of Fidel Castro predominate. His interpretation of this material is not free from *naïveté*, and in a way tends to confirm paradoxically the approach which he criticizes so severely.

The book, as so many on the Communist systems in Eastern Europe, suffers from the rapid changes in the political conjuncture of the last few years. Its analysis stops in 1986 with the so-called "campaign for the correction of mistakes," which sought to repair a number of injustices in the system but at the same time slashed the hopes of liberalization of the regime. Since then, bureaucratic centralism has prevailed. Socio-historic factors play a role here. Fitzgerald recognizes them, but situates their origin in the 1960s, apparently following the idea that the Revolution of 1959 signified a complete break with the past. The present East European experience shows the dangers of such interpretation.

It also shows the extent to which the ills of the bureaucratic-centralism which we find in Cuban society represent systemic features tied up with the practice of command-socialism. Fitzgerald underestimates these phenomena. Much of his perspective reflects the world of the deadly contradiction between socialism and capitalism, presented as part of a "good guys-bad guys" scenario. He is not free of revolutionary romanticism while discussing the rhetoric of the Cuban leaders. The presence of repression, control, corruption, and lack of respect for human rights is dealt with in hygienic terms.

The Cuban Revolution has accomplished a great deal, notably in the areas of basic needs provision, health, and education. Few will take issue with that. In addition, it has generated a sense of nationhood which makes Cuba stand out among its Latin American neighbors. The social costs, on the other hand, have been considerable. Over the years, Cuban society has come to suffer chronic stagnation on virtually all levels and in all spheres. Thus far, the new professionals have been denied a dynamizing role in this

situation (p. 144). About their potential little to nothing is known beyond speculation and Fitzgerald ends up asking almost the same questions with which he began.

The Making of a Transnational Community: Migration, Development, and Cultural Change in the Dominican Republic. EUGENIA GEORGES. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. xi + 270 pp. (Cloth US\$ 43.50)

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An implicit "division of labor" has emerged among those social scientists who adopt an historical-structuralist approach to international migration. It assigns to anthropologists the task of exploring the nature and role of intermediary structures within the migration process, such as social classes, social networks, and households. Few have managed to treat these intermediary structures as effectively as Eugenia Georges in her excellent case study of emigration from a rural Dominican community, Los Pinos.

Throughout the work Georges demonstrates the multiple ways in which social classes, social networks, and households help to organize and reproduce the Pinero migration stream. She often accomplishes this through the presentation of richly detailed case histories. For example, Georges describes how a woman from a poor Pinero household was able to escape the constraints on emigration usually imposed by low social class standing and gender ideology, by skillfully using her position as a domestic servant in an affluent, urban home to accumulate the necessary social contacts and savings to underwrite her emigration.

This reviewer especially appreciated Georges's discussion of emigrants who charged steep interest rates on loans offered to members of their social networks, and who agreed to enter into *matrimonios de negocio* ("business marriages") with visa-seeking family members or close friends in exchange for US\$ 1,500 or more. Such findings are important correctives to the tendency to romanticize migrants' social networks, these being viewed far too commonly as structures which always pertain to the realm of altruism and generalized reciprocity. While Georges does not mention this, such commodification of family ties and broader social networks is a trend which newly-arrived immigrants tend to repudiate and contrast with more "unselfish" exchanges back home.

Georges also explores the role of both gender and households in the migration process. Her study contributes to the small but growing literature documenting the impact of emigration on gender roles. In this regard, she concludes that emigration both "reinforced existing norms which perpetuated the subordination of women left behind in the community" and resulted in investments which disproportionately rewarded men over women. In light of these findings and indications that Dominican immigrant women have improved their status in the United States, this reviewer would have liked to see a fuller discussion of whether and how Pinero women have strategized to use emigration as a vehicle to escape from gender inequalities in the household and local economy.

One of the central controversies hotly debated in the migration literature concerns the relative costs and benefits international migration poses for developing countries. In their zeal to at once repudiate the modernization theorists' optimistic prognoses of rural revitalization and assign blame for the more common pattern of agricultural stagnation or decline, many migration scholars have pointed an accusing finger at the migrants themselves. Georges's masterful attention to the intersection of local, regional, national, and international processes provides us with a far clearer and more compelling understanding of the multiple determinants, such as local ecology, the class composition of the migration stream, and state agrarian policies, that have contributed to the precipitous decline in farming in Los Pinos. She correctly observes that

it is essential to break out of the tautology characterizing many evaluations of the putative impact of migration on rural sending communities: most are areas of institutionalized agrarian stagnation which migrants leave largely because of structural barriers to meaningful development. These same structural barriers present formidable obstacles to productive investment of migrants' remittances and savings. (p. 244)

In keeping with the best analyses of international migration, Georges is interested in tracing the flows of labor, capital, and commodities between El Pino and other locales within the community's transnational migration circuit. In contrast to the bleak depiction presented by dependency theorists who lament the syphoning off of valuable resources from migrant communities, Georges shows that emigrants' remittances and savings have helped to fortify El Pino's lively informal economy. Consequently, emigrants and returnees have provided productive alternatives for certain members of the community who lack the financial means and needed social networks to underwrite their own outmigration. Georges's study suggests, then, that the negative employment outcomes that outmigration commonly poses for more fully agricultural communities may be less severe for rural communi-

ties like El Pino, which function as commercial and service entrepôts to more remote rural communities.

This extremely competent and engaging study merits an especially serious reading from students of migration, Caribbeanists, and those interested in development and post-peasant societies. By contrast, those who are guided by the phrase "cultural change" in the book's title are apt to be disappointed. Slightly modifying the book's title: the making of transnational *culture*, is a process that neither this book nor most accounts of international migration have managed to treat adequately.

Earth and Spirit: Healing Lore and More from Puerto Rico. MARIA DOLORES HAJOSY BENEDETTI. Maplewood NJ: Waterfront Press, 1989. xvii + 245 pp. (Paper US\$ 9.95)

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Maria Dolores Hajosy Benedetti has compiled an important work on Puerto Rican traditional knowledge about herbal and other medicinal plants. Written as a collection of interviews, Hajosy Benedetti has ably translated her informants' deep attachment to the land and their love, respect, and reverence for the hidden power of plants. The author's own background parallels that of her informants. She speaks movingly of "a love of nature and natural healing ways and my Puerto Rican heritage which, too small a part of my childhood, I have begun to reclaim as an adult" (p. ix).

The recording of traditional pharmacopeia, in an era when knowledge about plants and the plants themselves is disappearing, makes *Earth and Spirit* a worthy and timely undertaking. The author's intention to give value and lend credence to the lore of folk healers is praiseworthy. The fact that few of these healers are specialists and most are "ordinary" individuals toiling in myriad unrelated occupations contributes to traditional folk medicine's invisibility. Nevertheless, the practices of traditional healers, we are told, "are being validated through science" (p. xiii).

A holistic approach to healing, embracing the simple wisdom of the continuity between nourishing meals, use of medicinal plants, and an active involvement and participation in keeping healthy, makes healers of us all (p. xii). It is this ability to learn natural healing techniques which makes tradi-

tional medicine so readily accessible and may account for its being under-rated.

While it is an admirable effort, the author's attempt to place traditional healing lore within a cultural and ecological context is not successful. Except for the prologue and epilogue, the book is descriptive rather than analytical in approach and lacks an overall framework. There is no attempt to connect issues raised in the prologue and epilogue with the interviews that constitute the bulk of the book.

An example of this lack of connection is illustrated by the very interesting discussion, in the prologue, of the scientific validity of the Puerto Rican folk designation of medicinal plants and illnesses as "hot or cold." In one of the interviews one learns that baby's formula is a "cold kind of milk." Whether indeed baby's formula fits into the "hot or cold" folk taxonomy or whether it is some other criterion which prompts this same informant to tell us that she would "never give [store-bought milk] to [her] own," we are not told (p. 27). The author replies:

Today even in the United States, where so much of the store-bought milk is manufactured, doctors recognize that breast milk protects the baby from infection and disease. I've also heard that the muscle tone in the mouths of children who breast feed is so much better than those who nurse from bottles. Breast feeding is pretty common in the United States now. (p. 27)

One wishes that the author had not always found it necessary to validate her informants' claims with reference to Western scientific principles. A preoccupation with legitimization seems to permeate Hajosy Benedetti's work so that it is stripped of other kinds of details and information of interest to anthropologists and others in the field of ethnopharmacology.

The questions of ritual accompanying herbal preparation and administration of "cures" is not given much attention. Information about the training of healers, how changes in medicinal preparations are incorporated and justified, or the role and function of the healer in Puerto Rican society are likewise given short shrift.

A danger which many anthropologists, including this reviewer, share with the author is that personal identification and involvement with one's informants can result in a researcher's too readily "understanding" what informants mean. For example, one of Hajosy Benedetti's informants speaks with pride about having "learned to be *real campesina* here, and that's what I'll be for as long as I live" (p. 37, emphasis added). It is a pity that the author then *knowing* what her informant means directs her next question to talk about "the land you live on now," thus closing off any number of other possible meanings.

Studying one's own people is an important and difficult task. It requires a detachment that, while achievable, demands making a split between affectivity and intellect. Hajosy Benedetti should be commended for her effort.

The Costs of Regime Survival: Racial Mobilization, Elite Domination and Control of the State in Guyana and Trinidad. PERCY C. HINTZEN. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989. x + 240 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.50)

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Elections in 1991 led to a peaceful change of government in Trinidad and Tobago (hereafter Trinidad) when the People's National Movement (PNM), in office from independence in 1962 until 1986, returned to power with a substantial majority of seats though only 45 percent of the popular vote. The entire Caribbean region now awaits what most hope will be the first honest elections in Guyana since 1964 when British and U.S. intervention helped to defeat Cheddi Jagan, the pro-Soviet, East Indian leader of the People's Progressive Party (PPP). A state of emergency was declared at the end of 1991 but internal and external pressure seems to have finally convinced President Desmond Hoyte's People's National Congress (PNC) that it can no longer commit electoral fraud every few years as Forbes Burnham had done from independence in 1966 until his death in 1985.

Percy Hintzen's important and intriguing sociological analysis of how Trinidad and Guyana achieved independence and how they have been governed, dominated, and exploited since that happy moment, is based upon his Yale doctoral dissertation and makes extremely effective use of some seventy interviews which he conducted with key leaders of major institutional sectors. One regrets that the more personal answers to the forty-seven questions posed to the most prominent leaders of the elite groups who have exerted such influence and authority in both countries were not evaluated in greater detail. It would have added depth to this fine study which could have been even better if there were a little more "flesh and blood." Karl Marx, after all, reminded us that men and women – not abstractions – make their own history even if they do not make it out of "whole cloth."

Racial hostility between the descendants of black slaves, now primarily an urban proletariat, and East Indian indentured laborers, rural and agri-

cultural, is a reality often made worse by unscrupulous politicians in these culturally plural societies. East Indians compose about 51 percent of Guyana's population and make up some 40 percent of Trinidad's citizens. The PNM and the PNC are perceived by the East Indians as vehicles to further the interests of the black community. Both mini-states depend upon the export of raw materials, especially what the developed nations will pay for Guyana's bauxite and Trinidad's oil.

Winning independence necessitated the mobilization of the masses by intellectuals and politicians. About 75 percent of the population of both countries is "lower class," composed of urban and agricultural laborers, small peasants, and large numbers of unemployed. Once freedom had been won, political leaders concentrated upon the retention of power rather than dealing with the collective needs of the entire population which Hintzen nicely summarizes as "social order and stability; self-sustaining economic development; equity; social security; and civil and political rights" (p. 199).

Eric Williams, the brilliant academic who led Trinidad to independence and governed the country until his death in 1981, opted for a mixed-economy capitalism while Guyana became a Third-World socialist state under Forbes Burnham. Hintzen concludes, however, that it has been primarily the urban middle and upper classes who have benefited most from the policies pursued in both states. Rural development and agricultural diversification were absolutely essential, but neither regime acted since it would have aided the East Indian masses and not their black constituencies.

Especially striking is Hintzen's observation that only ten of the thirty-one Guyanese leaders interviewed regarded themselves as socialists even though both the PNC and the PPP were committed to socialism. It is not surprising that with Burnham's death and with the economy in shambles, Desmond Hoyte retreated rapidly from the late leader's doctrinaire views. Equally fascinating are the conclusions derived from his investigation of the forty elite Trinidad leaders. Nineteen expressed support for the PNM but only five were black. The other fourteen were wealthy East Indians and whites who disliked the black identification of the PNM but who nonetheless supported that party because the government pushed economic policies which favored them.

Hintzen also notes the excessive influence of the United States and the International Monetary Fund in advocating "free markets" as the solution to the economic and social problems confronted by most states. This commitment to a weird, utopian fantasy which seems to be driving the United States itself toward Third-World status has little relevance for less developed countries like Guyana and Trinidad. Once they have achieved a degree of racial harmony, they will require economic planning and the sys-

tematic allocation of scarce resources in order to provide for the collective needs of all their citizens.

It is impossible to disagree with Hintzen's desire to see the fulfilment of these collective needs in Guyana and Trinidad; alas, when one looks at the awful failure of even wealthy states to achieve a society in which all citizens have some opportunity for creative activity, it is difficult to anticipate anything but a long, hard, brutal struggle.

Singing with Sai Baba: The Politics of Revitalization in Trinidad. MORTON KLAS. Boulder CO: Westview, 1991. xvi + 187 pp. (Paper US\$ 23.00)

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Klass authored one of the first ethnographic descriptions of the diaspora East Indians of Trinidad following fieldwork in "Amity" village of the Chaguanas district in 1957 (Klass 1961). In that work he depicted a village self-awareness drawn from northern India and carefully cultivated in the small, intense Caribbean world of island nationalism.

In the volume under review, Klass set out to complement that earlier work with description and analysis of the rapid growth of the Sai Baba religious movement among Trinidad East Indians in the last two decades. Sathya Sai Baba, a living Hindu saint resident near Mysore in south India, presents a universalistic, egalitarian, and personalistic yet essentially Indian message. To his worldwide devotees he is a godman worthy of intense Bhakti devotion. For the East Indians of Trinidad the Sathya Sai Baba movement appears to be a revitalization movement facilitating considerable reorganization of group relationships within the East Indian polity as well as with Afro-Trinidadians.

The text is divided into three large topic areas. The first third of the book treats the historical context of the East Indian diaspora to Trinidad, East Indian cultural and political organization at mid-twentieth century (with particular focus on Amity village), and persistence and change in Trinidad East Indian life through the boom and bust oil years 1974 to 1984.

The second third of the book describes the living Hindu saint Sathya Sai Baba. Baba, to devotees, is the reincarnation of Shirdi Sai Baba, a Gujarati godman who died in 1918, eight years before the birth of the living Baba.

Both claimed to be avatars of Shiva. Sathya Sai Baba now claims to also be the avatar of Shiva's consort Shakti, and to be Vishnu. The religious organization developed around devotion to this godman focuses on *darshan*, or his blessed presence, and on community organized group singing of devotional songs, events known as *Satsangs*. By origins in districts of India separated by language and geography, by claims to divinity drawn from distinct traditions of Hinduism, and by egalitarian worship eliciting the voices of all participants without benefit of priesthood, the tone of the Sathya Sai Baba movement demonstrates an almost post-modernist sensibility which resonates deeply to diaspora East Indians.

The third section of the book turns to the description of the Sai Baba movement in Trinidad. Klass traces origin stories detailing the first sighting of Baba's picture, the first hearing of Baba's taped voice, the first anticipation of miracles, the first pilgrimages to Baba's ashram, Prasanti Nilayam. He describes a *Satsang* and its variants in some detail, the organization (a careful non-organization) of *Satsang* groups, and the devotional lives of individuals and families.

Finally, Klass considers some of the political and social implications of the success of the Sai Baba movement and its decidedly East Indian character in the Trinidad political arena. As author and ethnographic observer Klass is painstaking, sensible, and cautious to a fault. To prepare the reader for the third section of the book and its new material, he devotes the first two thirds to an uncontroversial review of information available in other sources. For the reader new to the topics this may be quite useful. The volume adds to the literature of the Sai Baba phenomenon in diaspora East Indian communities and outlines some of the questions ahead.

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The Muslimeen Grab for Power: Race, Religion and Revolution in Trinidad and Tobago. SELWYN RYAN. Port of Spain: Inprint Caribbean, 1991. vii + 345 pp. (Paper TT\$ 97.75)

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In this chronicle of "the most serious political crisis" experienced by Trinidad and Tobago since independence (p. 52), Selwyn Ryan dissects in detail the government coup attempted in July 1990 by a local (and primarily Afro-Trinidadian) Muslim group, the Jamaat-al-Muslimeen.

Ryan considers the "July crisis" from a variety of viewpoints, including those of politicians, the populace, the media, and the dissidents and their leader, Imam Abu Bakr. Ryan's investigation rests on an interesting assertion: contrary to Trinidad and Tobago's traditional reputation for political tranquility, the insurrection was "a logical continuation" (p. 1) of "... riots, rebellions and revolutionary movements which have been characteristic of Trinidad's history..." (p. vii), a history only interrupted by periods of apparent calm or coerced consensus (p. 3). In positing that the insurrection exemplifies fundamental social conflict in Trinidad's colonial and post-colonial experience, Ryan places the coup attempt within a historical framework, suggesting the existence of political consciousness and resistance under various forms of oppression in Trinidad, and by extension in the Caribbean. This level of abstract theorizing is, however, rare in the book, which is both strengthened and weakened by an emphasis on specifics and detail.

Ryan addresses three general themes: political conflict in Trinidad's history, particularly recent precipitates of the crisis; dissection of the six-day insurrection itself; and the role of religion in politics. He is most successful with the second concern, and is unevenly persuasive with the first and third. This is due in part to Ryan's focus on event rather than process. He chooses not to develop extensively his study within the wider structural context of social inequality in Trinidad, or the relation between state policies and their repercussions for civil society. For example, while we are told that fomenting the coup attempt were an economic crisis creating a "new poor" (p. 17) and a "legitimacy crisis" regarding the then-ruling party (p. 19), and that despite the dissidents' religious inspiration (*jihad*) their agenda was one of drastic social reform, the political-economic genesis of the insurrection is not as analytically developed as it might have been. Nevertheless, the book

indicates clearly that the "July crisis" laid bare the many pressure points – political, economic, social – building up in the society. This approach conforms with the genre of perceptive reportage well-informed by sociological sensibilities.

However, the focus on event rather than process is also the book's success. Ryan's keen eye for particulars gives us an anatomy of situation that allows putting our concerns in perspective. The book also contains archival material, pulling together for local and international readers selections from various published and unpublished sources. The benefit is that these take the book beyond its immediate intent: it provides heretofore scant information on Indian-African Muslim relations in the Caribbean, and serves as a comparative source for research on politics, ethnicity, and religion in postcolonial societies.

Particularly illuminating are the Trinidadian cultural perceptions and self-definitions revealed in people's reactions to the insurrection, in terms of divisions within the Muslim community and among the broader population (including some fascinating Hindu responses), ethnic and class stereotyping, and the way in which ethnicity is ideologically made coherent with claims to "legitimate" religious group membership. Indeed, Chapters 4, 7, and 8 provide intriguing revelations of ethnic and class tensions, as the insurrection is interpreted and responsibility is levied at various groups. In Trinidadians' discourse, we see the identification of victims and perpetrators as diverse as, among others, the suffering poor; marginalized black, urban youth; recent "small island" immigrants; the politically duped; International Monetary Fund policies; the "haves" who remove capital reserves permanently from the country; or Syrian and East Indian bourgeois and petit bourgeois. The problem is that we are left tantalized: Ryan has enticing material here that if expanded would add greatly to understanding the dynamics of Trinidadian life and social relations.

The discussion of religion and politics in the last four chapters suggests an ambivalent conceptualization of the forms of Islam. Characterizing the Muslimen in part as "millenarianism" (p. 18) and reflecting a larger, recent "... decline of established religions and the emergence of new types of fundamentalist sectarian movements of which radical Islam is but one..." (p. ix), is a perspective that can be read as setting certain expressions of Islam apart from others in a kind of antiquated, and rather Orientalist, orthodox/Great Tradition – marginal/Little Tradition fashion. "[M]uch of what Bakr did which seems puzzling to ... secular minds, is only understandable if one discards the 'wisdom of commonsense' and seeks to enter the mind of the Islamic fundamentalist" (p. 301). This implicit contrast between rationalism and fervor, along with speculations regarding the "many 'faces' of Abu

Bakr" (p. 278), provides a glimpse of a complex individual and his motivations more than it addresses broader questions about religious challenges to state authority.

The book ends with a slim excursion into the relevance of the Quran for political resistance. While a valid focus of discussion, it requires deeper treatment of Islamic belief and practice. It would have been more useful for the author to mine his own considerable expertise in regional politics. Contrasting the coup attempt with other contemporary Caribbean examples, such as Grenada or Haiti, locates Trinidad's experience within larger contexts and precursors, giving a regional view in addition to a Trinidadian one.

Nonetheless, this book should be required reading for students of Caribbean political protest and New World Islam. It is also an interesting supplementary source for research on ethnic and class relations in Trinidad.

Haiti: The Breached Citadel. PATRICK BELLEGARDE-SMITH. Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1990. xxi + 217 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.00)

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Haiti's complex history – at once inspirational and disconcerting – resists compression. Compression becomes problematic when an account presents poorly known facts about four major historical periods, privileges one of several competing perspectives for interpreting culture-society-politics connections (native over foreign, subjectivity over objectivity, or sentiment over reason), and confronts issues which have been inadequately explored (gender) or consistently misconstrued ("Voodoo"). Bellegarde-Smith has brooked all such obstacles to rush this book to market.

The metaphorical subtitle draws an analogy between (d)evolution of sociocultural and political-economic conditions, and physical deterioration of La Citadelle Laferrière, once the sturdiest of several nineteenth-century fortresses protecting the Haitian Revolution's simultaneous attack on slavery, colonialism, and racism, and now Haiti's most famous monument. Its bitter-sweet symbolism grounds an attempt to explain Haiti by juxtaposing the integrity, harmony, and endurance of the nation's African heritage to the disunity, missed opportunities, and horrors marking the state's trajectory from 1806, when revolutionary Emperor Jean-Jacques Dessalines was

assassinated, until 1986, when dynastic dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier was driven into exile. Haiti's turbulent history during the intervening years, Bellegarde-Smith argues, reflects foreign imperialism, racism and sexism, and the elitism of Eurocentric or Afrocentric domestic ruling-class factions.

This sweeping account's scholarly apparatus is minimal. Five chapters cover the "Haitian" past from Columbus's arrival in Hispaniola to Duvalier's departure. A postscript examines external and internal factors clouding democracy's future after Duvalier. Two appendices "replace" analysis of allegedly crucial matters: one a sparse chronology of great dates in Haitian history; the other a flat table indicating basic characteristics of "*Vodun*" [sic] deities, and their "equivalents" elsewhere. There are seven pages of largely perfunctory notes. A nine-page bibliographical essay discusses "useful" English works on Haitiana, while hinting at writings of superior quality by "top" Haitian intellectuals in French or Creole. Finally, a skeletal index provides a rough guide to the text's contents.

As employed here, conventional social science reference style, coupled with substitution of a bibliographical essay for a reference list, hampers efforts to check sources purportedly warranting factual reports or speculative generalizations. Errors – faulty diction, mischaracterized Haitian historians or social critics, carelessly contradictory descriptive and analytic statements – mar Bellegarde-Smith's text. Misrendered French quotations (e.g., a poem by Oswald Durand [p. 68]) cast doubt on the reliability of all translation, and arbitrarily disambiguated Creole written in fractured French orthography (e.g., elements of "*Vodun*" cosmology [pp. 13-15] and proverbs furnishing chapter epigraphs) oversimplifies the semantics and politics of meaning.

Two theoretical props of long vintage guide this Afrocentric account: "culture" as a closed inventory of traits, visible on the bodies (if not flowing in the blood) of its bearers; and ranked dualism in symbolic forms and social institutions created by culture contact amidst inequalities of power. Its principal methodological tools are reversal of terms composing dichotomies that haunt Haitian Studies, inversion of previous trait valuations, invocation of politically correct ancestors (often females and usually by name alone), and temporal extension of analytic units. Gross descriptive and analytic categories, as well as simplistic argument, inscribe the Haitian experience, while analogy, innocent of contextual qualification, carries the burden comparing Haiti to its neighbors.

Scientific concepts, Bellegarde-Smith feels, should be modeled exclusively on certain formal dichotomies of social identity defined by Haitian culture: color (black/mulatto), class (mass/elite), gender (female/male), language (Creole/French), religion ("*Vodun*"/Christianity), and mode of con-

sciousness (African/European). In his view, social difference represented (depicted) by such dichotomies undermines genuine national unity; not weakness of political institutions that represent (present again) conditions and sensibilities more fluid than dichotomies indicate, and limit their noxious uses. Haitian cultural creativity, he contends, resides in peasant and proletarian fidelity to African ancestral traditions, which a subservient ruling class fails to harness for public policy-making.

Shortcomings and pitfalls of an account so conceived emerge in Bellegarde-Smith's treatment of Saint-Domingue, persist as he examines independent Haiti's increasingly "modern" underdevelopment, and decrease only slightly as he moves through the American Occupation to the Duvalier years. In each period, fast and loose deployment of descriptive categories impoverishes analysis of culture, socioeconomic structure, and political processes. Intermittent insight into the manifold articulations of neocolonialism, economic underdevelopment, and political repression notwithstanding, analysis and comparison by the above-mentioned methods conceal more than they reveal about color, class, and gender.

Intending to demolish images of slave docility, for example, Bellegarde-Smith asserts that slaves were, by definition, rebellious (pp. 39-40). But, conflating distinctions between *bosal* ("unseasoned" African plantation slaves) and *maron* (African or Creole rebel slaves) only obviates the challenge of analyzing the range of responses to enslavement. Similarly, *kwipe* ("suck-tooth") is the most appropriate response to Bellegarde-Smith's transformation, within just three paragraphs, of *blan manan* (poor white laborers or "clodhoppers") from a class of "serfs" into a "a sort of rebellious urban proletariat" (pp. 36-37).

The *idée fixe* that French mercantilism "prevented" (rather than inhibited and distorted) development of national markets in Saint-Domingue overdetermines Bellegarde-Smith's take on negative effects of metropolitan financial, ideological, and political power. He thus ignores the plantation regime's internal contradictions, including profit-conscious allocation of slave provision grounds, that promoted institutionalization of restricted markets for local goods, services, and resources. Responses by free men, freedmen, and slaves to fettered development of "proto-national" markets shaped 1790s politics more definitively than we are told.

Bellegarde-Smith's reminder that a regionally-organized army assumed political and governmental functions after 1804 licenses him to minimize the state military/civil bureaucracy's significance as a secondary occupation for the ruling class, a fairly steady source of income and prestige for intermediate classes and an avenue of upward mobility for segments of the peasantry. Shunning detailed analysis of regionally-varied peasant rebellions or

Haiti's first political parties, Nationals and Liberals, he offers unnecessarily abstract statements about similarities among urban parties or rural protest movements throughout the Americas, while claiming that *la politique de doublure* – mediocre black presidents manipulated by cynical mulatto advisers to dupe the black masses – lasted from 1844 until 1915! Like other urbane Haitian and foreign leftists, he also smugly takes it for granted that *Cacoisme* (a reductionist cover term for “the entire range of [Haitian] peasant resistance” [p. 71]) would have transformed Haiti culturally and politically but for the American Occupation.

Bellegarde-Smith's idealized Haiti is indubitably non-Western despite counter evidence. Christianity, like all other Western imports, offers Haitians nothing save self-alienation and exploitation. “*Vodun*” stands alone, he reports, echoing the “upper-class female psychologist” who introduced him to it (p. 10), as Haiti's authentic national religion. Haitian Catholicism and Protestantism are nullities, even though those world religions have formed two sides of a religious triangle of forces, alternately “engaged” and “disengaged” politically, for at least 170 years and peasants now routinely use *Kreyen* to mean “person” or “human.”

On the untenable premise that religion metonymizes culture, “*Vodun*” becomes the vital core of all meaning and value. It is distinguished by every good thing that a breached citadel or “penetrated culture” lacks: spiritual humanism (or humanized spiritualism), communalism, decentralization, and tolerance of difference (cosmological, theological, and social). Above all, unlike Christianity, the national religion is “democratic,” equal access to the priesthood for males and females having drawn our insider's gaze away from hieratic elements. These distinctive features “carry over,” he contends, to all other institutional domains except national economics, public education, and politics.

For Bellegarde-Smith, yesteryear's culture-metonymic function of “*Vodun*” (“the” organizational principle of resistance) does not differ from today's. Changes in ritual performance after 1804 and professionalization of the priesthood during this century, to say nothing of Duvalierism's partial cooptation of national religion's symbolic power, matter little. Nor is he disturbed by slim evidence that “*Vodun*” might easily be reoriented from cultural resistance/communal protection to proactive national mobilization, in order to solve many-sided problems – intensified by irresponsible national leadership, inchoate followership, and racist/sexist neocolonialism.

Readers ought not be so dazzled by authorial credentials – Haitian, historian, nonsexist democrat of nationalist-populist bent – that they fail to question this account's premises, factual description, analytic maneuvers, and conclusions. The dominant language of social scientific discourse inevitably

filters, if not mutes, the multiple voices in which Haitian men or women tell their stories. Bellegarde-Smith finds a new register in English to reiterate old observations, while replacing egregious textual silences about Haitian life and politics with a rush of sound. His voice broadcasts more sour noise than sweet music.

The Bahamas in Slavery and Freedom. HOWARD JOHNSON. Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle; London: James Currey, 1991. viii + 184 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95)

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This volume collects nine articles previously published in various journals between 1983 and 1989 and an unpublished paper from 1990. The six years that Howard Johnson taught at the College of the Bahamas were fruitful. Now at the University of Delaware, he continues to write on the Bahamas (see Johnson 1991). His work on labor and migration issues rivals and complements that of Michael Craton and Gail Saunders (e.g., Craton 1986; Craton & Saunders 1992; Saunders 1983, 1990).

Themes of the control and exploitation of laborers in the Bahamas weave through most of these chapters. The Bahamas, though shaped by similar forces of European conquest, colonization, and capitalism, along with the associated phenomena of slavery, wage labor, and migration, nevertheless experienced different patterns of development from the West Indian sugar colonies. Several agricultural staples, including cotton, pineapples, and sisal, were tried in the Bahamas, but none dominated the economy for any great time, and other activities, such as wrecking, sponging, fishing, and bootlegging, were important before tourism. Consequently, social features associated with the plantation economy, while not entirely absent, did not predominate as they did in the sugar colonies.

In "The Self-Hire System During Slavery," we learn that after the collapse of cotton plantations around 1800, Bahamian slave owners obtained cash income from their slaves by allowing them to negotiate for wages. "The Emergence of a Peasantry During Slavery" shows that slave and free people of color dominated the local production and sale of foodstuffs even before 1834. These people, as peasants or wage laborers, often competed with "lib-

erated Africans," about 6,000 of whom were landed in the Bahamas between 1811 and 1860 and were exploited in an indenture system. Meanwhile, a share system enabled absentee landlords to lower labor costs and risks of production, while keeping their estates intact and accumulating surplus. This system of exploitation lasted until the early twentieth century, when the pineapple industry declined and wage labor attracted Bahamians to Florida. Johnson emphasizes that free wage labor did not become the "norm" until the service economy based on tourism developed after the 1930s. Until then, a variety of forms of coercion and exploitation characterized post-emancipation labor systems, including the credit and truck systems through which the "Bahamian agro-commercial bourgeoisie" controlled and exploited laborers by keeping them indebted.

"Social Control and the Colonial State: The Reorganization of the Police Force, 1888-1893" describes the elite's concern that, with the withdrawal of the West India Regiment, a non-Bahamian paramilitary was required to maintain order. While Barbadians were recruited to the police, the dominant minority sought, through immigration restrictions between 1925 and 1933, to limit commercial competition from Greek, Lebanese, and Chinese merchants, a selective immigration policy to protect first the property and then the profits of the elite. In "Labour on the Move: West Indian Migration, 1922-1930," and "Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Labour Migration to Florida," Johnson shows why West Indian immigrants were needed to help build the tourism business, while the emigration of Bahamians both reflected and contributed to the underdevelopment of the islands.

There is some repetition and overlap, yet there is also some contradiction. For example, Johnson seems to contradict himself about the role of landownership in the elite's control of the former slaves. In one essay he claims that "the restriction of access to land was not essential to the creation of a stable labour force," (p. 105) but elsewhere he asserts that the dominance of the white mercantile elite "was based on ownership of land," as well as control of credit and trade (p. 127). Certainly, from his evidence on the share system and the structure of the pineapple industry, concentrated landownership was one of the ways that kept laborers dependent and impoverished. It would have been helpful if Johnson had tried to assign relative weights to these various factors, perhaps showing how their importance changed from one time to another, and to show more explicitly how the Bahamas is distinct in these respects not only from the sugar colonies but also, say, from Belize.

This useful book brings together ten essays by one of the major historians of the Bahamas, but its value would have been enhanced by an extended

introduction or an integrative conclusion locating his scholarship in relation to the historiography of the Bahamas and the wider Caribbean.

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Conchtown USA: Bahamian Fisherfolk in Riviera Beach, Florida. CHARLES C. FOSTER (with folk songs and tales collected by Veronica Huss). Boca Raton: Florida Atlantic University Press, 1991. x + 176 pp. (Paper US\$ 24.95)

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Conchtown USA describes a community of white Bahamians that existed fifty years ago and which today is virtually gone. In 1939 a large majority of the 800 persons living in Riviera (today called Riviera Beach) were British subjects from the Bahamas and their children. This community is not described in the ethnographic or social science literature and is, I believe, virtually unknown to scholars. Although I have done research on Abaco, the island in the Bahamas from which many of the settlers in Riviera came, and have visited nearby West Palm Beach, I was unaware of this community. The book is of further importance because it describes the history of WPA workers who conducted aspects of the research.

The book is divided into three parts. The first consists of a folio of forty-three photographs taken by Foster in May 1939, with captions from a photo-essay, which he produced soon after he took the pictures, printed under

each photograph. The second is a story of the project and its sponsorship by the WPA: how the photographs were taken and recently restored; Stetson Kennedy's recording in January 1940 of music sung by William and Mary Jane Roberts; the folklore collecting of Veronica Huss (who died in 1971 and to whom the book is dedicated); Foster's successful efforts to locate the remaining Bahamians in Riviera ("well aware of my inexperience in the art of research, I asked Stetson Kennedy to go to the Riviera Beach area ... and interview the persons whose names [I had obtained from an informant]..."[p. 57]). And the third is a history of the Bahamas which led Foster to his guiding theme: "Mother Nature rules the Bahamas with an uncompromising hand. She will not allow anyone to starve but neither will she let anyone be very prosperous for very long" (p. 58). The white Bahamians, known as "conchs," lived on an off-shore island before settling in Riviera; their way of life in both locations is described; stories, folktales, and songs are related by the Roberts family; and the midwife born on Long Island, Bahamas, recounts her beliefs in obeah (magic). An epilogue briefly describes what remains – primarily buildings – of Bahamian culture in Riviera Beach. Appendix 1 provides the interview forms that Veronica Huss used for describing the midwife. Appendix 2 provides a useful chronology of the Bahamas and the Riviera area. A 33-1/3 rpm soundsheet set into the book contains seven selections recorded in January 1940.

The book arose from Foster's efforts to resurrect his "neglected negatives." He initially planned a "folio-sized coffee-table book," but learned from Kennedy that he had in his files copies of the songs, riddles, and stories that Huss had collected, and that taped copies of the disk recordings of the Roberts' voices could be had from the Florida Folklife Program. These materials stimulated him to visit Riviera Beach in May 1987. He located Bahamians and enlisted Kennedy's assistance. Correspondence with descendants yielded some information and old family photographs. The book followed.

While the photography and sound recording meet high standards for the times, the field research by Veronica Huss did not meet social science standards of 1939. Huss was a young writer (age 22) who had no apparent training. Foster was assigned to take photographs to illustrate Huss's manuscript. Foster was unimpressed with her and comments that "she had no real manuscript – just a lot of notes" (p. 52). The manuscript she finally produced was rejected by supervisors because it "looked like an attempt to write a novel" (p. 49). Her rapport with informants, however, seems to have been excellent. The midwife section of *Conchtown USA*, taken directly from Huss's notes, is fascinating (pp. 150-58). In a series of stories, which Foster says Huss knew were "pure folklore" (p. 158), we learn that whites on Long Island were afraid of blacks practicing obeah upon them. And we are told by

the midwife that the use of magic to protect fields (causing the trespasser or thief to swell up) is practiced by some in Riviera. The social control aspects are not grasped by either Huss or Foster (see Otterbein 1959, 1965).

Given the diverse materials available to him (his photographs, Huss's notes, the sound recordings, histories of the Bahamas and Riviera, and Kennedy's recent interviews, as well as his own), Foster did an outstanding job of integrating them into a coherent work. Typically we ethnographers have abundant field data and cut out duplicate information when we produce a book. Foster used everything available to produce his "ethnography."

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Kabethechino: A Correspondence on Arawak. JOHN P. BENNETT & RICHARD HART, edited by Janette Forte. Georgetown: Demerara Publishers, 1991. vi + 271 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.00)

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The Arawak Indians, or *lokono(n)* "people" as they call themselves, are the original inhabitants of Trinidad, the mouth of the Orinoco, and the coastal areas of the Guianas. The editor of the book under review notes that at present approximately 15,000 Arawaks live in Guyana. In addition, at least several thousand Arawaks live in Suriname, and several hundred in Venezuela and French Guiana. Many traditional aspects of Arawak culture are under threat of extinction (see, for example, Forte 1988), and nowadays probably only a small portion of the total number of Arawaks still speak the Arawak language.

Most of the recent publications on the Arawak language describe the dialect which is spoken in Suriname (see for example Taylor 1977, Pet 1987, Van Baarle et al. 1989). In Guyana, a very important contribution to the

study of the Arawak language has been made by Canon John Peter Bennett, born in 1914, the first Arawak ordained priest in the Anglican Church. His *Arawak-English Dictionary with an English Word-list* (1989) is outstanding in its accuracy and comprehensiveness.

The title, *Kabethechino*, an Arawak word meaning "friends,"¹ refers to a friendship between Bennett and Richard Hart, a Jamaican solicitor and historian resident in England, who encouraged him to compile the dictionary. Their correspondence, which stretches from 1965 to 1988, occupies the major part of the book. The letters deal chiefly with personal matters and practical problems concerning the compilation of the dictionary, but they also contain observations and speculations on the culture and history of the Amerindians in general and the Arawaks in particular.

The letters are preceded by a fairly detailed outline of Bennett's life and work, as told in his own words. This part of the book is based on interviews conducted with Bennett by the editor, Janette Forte. In addition, the book contains a short glossary explaining some lesser-known terms relating to Guyanese Amerindian culture, notes on persons mentioned in the text, and bibliographical references.

In my opinion, the principal merit of this book lies in the insight it gives into the life and work of Bennett. Bennett emerges from this book as someone who bridges a gap between two cultures. Although he occupies an important position in an essentially western institution like the Anglican Church, this has not in any way diminished his interest in his own cultural background. Therefore, as the editor writes in her introduction, it is to be hoped that Bennett's story will help young Amerindians to regain pride in their cultures.

The back cover of the book also claims that it is an important contribution to our knowledge of various aspects of Arawak culture. However, the book contains little information on this subject that is not already available elsewhere, for example in Bennett (1986).

I conclude this review with two critical remarks. First, in view of the great variety of issues that are discussed in a rather unsystematic order, the editor should have provided the book with an index. Second, some parts of the correspondence, however relevant they may have been to the authors at the time, are less interesting to present-day readers. In my opinion, these parts should have been scrapped or summarized. This applies in particular to the letters exchanged between Hart and some others who were only very marginally involved in the project.

NOTE

1. In fact, the structure of the Arawak word is quite complex: *ka-* attributive prefix ("to have"), *-behe-* "(someone's) friend," *-chi* nominalizer/relativizer, *-no* plural marker. The word refers to a couple of persons who stand in a mutual relation of friendship towards each other.

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Indianen en kerken in Suriname: identiteit en autonomie in het binnenland. JOOP VERNOOIJ. Paramaribo: Stichting Wetenschappelijke Informatie (SWI), 1989. 178 pp. (Paper NLG 45.00)

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This is the first systematic approach to the history of the churches and evangelization policies in Suriname. But the contribution of Vernooij's book resides also in the extensive archival research that forms its base.

The author proposes to develop some insights on the relationship between the churches and the Indians of Suriname. He reviews the evangelization work of the main churches that have been working in Suriname

from the sixteenth century until the present among the native peoples. In this part emphasis is put on the work of the "Evangelische Broeder Gemeente" (the Moravian Church) and the Roman Catholic Church, but we find also detailed data on the work of the Reformed Church, the West Indian Mission, and the Interior Mission Fellowship.

The work of the mission among the Caribs and the Arawaks of the coastal region is well documented, while the more recent history of contact with the Wayana, Trio, and Akuriyo groups in the south of the country is only summarily reviewed.

Vernooij gives us an overview of the economic and political situation of the Indian communities within the framework of the Suriname State and Constitution. This review includes the forms of local rule and administration during the Dutch colonial regime and since the establishment of the Republic of Suriname.

Discussion of juridical autonomy and landrights seems to have been a main topic in the treaties and political agreements with the native leaders ever since the attainment of peace at the beginning of the eighteenth century. According to Vernooij the context in which evangelization took place has to be characterized by the cooperation of the churches with the colonial regime in order to dominate the groups of the interior and by the search of the Indian communities for allies and channels through which to bargain with the colonial/central regime. The key concepts for an understanding of relationships between the Indian communities and the Suriname institutions are, according to Vernooij, autonomy and identity. The Indians have not been a passive subject of evangelization (or Surinamization), nor do they respond to the prevalent image of being submissive and unaware of their rights.

Vernooij argues that in the past two decades the churches have recognized the failure of their evangelization campaign, and have become aware that its failure is not the "superficiality" of the christianization of the Indians, but consists rather in the failure of the churches themselves to show respect for the culture and the cosmological vision of the Indian societies, and to act accordingly.

Some remarks of Vernooij as a researcher should also be given attention. He notes, for example, that the historical sources are not always available in Suriname, and that efforts to get this kind of material back into the country should be encouraged. It should be added that anthropological research among the Indians has been done in Suriname in recent years, but the interest in these groups has not been a priority within Suriname itself. These groups are undergoing rapid and dramatic acculturation, and the documentation of their institutions and knowledge is urgent. Vernooij's plea for dia-

logue and mutual enrichment between missionaries and Native Americans carries with it a call for responsibility towards the safeguard of the integrity of the Indian societies and of their cultural heritage.

Curaçao: Willemstad, City of Monuments. C.L. TEMMINCK GROLL, W. VAN ALPHEN, R. APELL & R.G. GILL. The Hague: Gary Schwartz/SDU Publishers, 1990. 123 pp. (Paper NLG 40.00)

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It is always an exciting experience to open a new volume on the architecture of a Caribbean island. It is even more so when the book describes an island not yet visited. One longs to discover how it will compare with the familiar, how it is unique, and whether one's pet theories and preconceptions apply to this new "test case." It is a particular pleasure when such a new book is written by experienced professional architectural historians. Temminck Groll's work in vernacular architecture may be familiar to English-speaking students of West Indian architecture from his excellent little co-authored study of the architecture of Saba (Temminck Groll & Brugman n.d.). Unfortunately, much of his work is published only in Dutch.

Willemstad, one of the great colonial cities of the Caribbean, has long been neglected by students of Caribbean architectural history. The title of this book belies the fact that many of the structures described and beautifully depicted in this volume are not, in fact, *monuments* designed by professional architects, but are, rather, historic vernacular houses.

The volume is divided into two principal parts. The first seventy pages include three essays on Curaçao: one on its history (Temminck Groll & Van Alphen), one on modern Willemstad (Gill), and one on the preservation of its historic buildings (Apell). The second part is a photo essay including forty-four color plates. These photos are remarkable for their clarity and excellent quality of reproduction. What magic the photographer, Jan Derwig, conjured up to remove all the automobiles from the foregrounds of so many places in a crowded city, I would like to know. The photos present the city and its buildings in a clean, crisp, and colorful light – one of the finest such collections I have seen. Only six of the photos are of interiors – one longs to see more. This portion of the book will remind the reader of the

popular *Caribbean Style* (Slesin *et al.* 1985), though it is done in slightly smaller format.

Each of the essays is of interest, though I found the forty-two-page historical review of the greatest value. It opens with a rather remarkable tinted fold-out panorama of Willemstad, photographed ca. 1900. Any preconception the reader might harbor about Dutch West Indian architecture falling outside the mainstream of the Caribbean creole tradition is quickly set aside by the authors. In one of the clearest statements I have read regarding the essence of creole architecture, they begin:

The architecture of the Caribbean region evolved autonomously from the moment of colonization until the 1920s, and resulted in a very distinct Caribbean style. Three factors contributed to this development: influence from the parent countries, local conditions, and inter-island contacts. (p. 14)

While other observers might wish to add "innovation under conditions of relative isolation from European models," "architectural influence from North or South America," and in some localities at least, "cultural syncretism," these would certainly follow the authors' suggestions in importance. They go on to describe how the three factors intertwined to produce a unique and vivacious style of architecture. The chapter is accompanied by an abundance of historic prints, photos, and maps. A new map of the center of Willemstad, drafted for this book, is, unfortunately, difficult to read (p. 15). The authors outline the historical development of the city, treating each of its majors districts.

Interesting comparisons are drawn with the development of other seventeenth-century Dutch overseas cities – Mauritsstad-Recife, New Amsterdam-Brooklyn, and Batavia. Many Dutch trading cities of the early seventeenth century had a "Breedestraat" or "Broadway," for example. Dutch military engineers, being among the few professional designers available, played a strong role in the design of houses. Domestic architectural form differed substantially depending on the location of the house. Houses built inside the city's defense walls were narrow and deep, conforming to more severe limitations on space, while the extramural dwellings were expansive and developed different floorplans with larger and more robust facades. This insight clearly holds for cities such as New Orleans, Havana, and Santo Domingo as well. Legal proclamations also played a role in the development of the city; the houses were painted in pastel colors after pure white was outlawed in 1817 because "the white walls were injurious to the sight" (p. 24).

Problems with the book are few. There is no index. Several lines or perhaps an entire page of text is missing after the bottom of p. 39. The origins of

some of the most distinctive elements of the architectural style are not discussed. For example, many eighteenth-century houses such as "The Five Senses" have multiple gables and roof ridges. Does this hark back to the original seventeenth-century (Jacobean-like) colonial style whose earliest models have been erased by hurricanes and other forms of intervention? Finally, much of what is important in this architecture – indeed, the essence of the creole tradition – is simply not treated. No plans are provided to enable the reader to separate and identify the various vernacular traditions by their geometric signatures and dates. This is all the more curious because Temminck Groll's above-mentioned study is a model in this respect. The authors appear to suffer from a certain vernacularphobia in this volume, a condition undoubtedly related to its role in focusing public attention on the political and economic support required for the large-scale preservation and restoration project it recommends. With their predilection for emphasizing the individuality of "monuments" they de-emphasize the unique, non-European contributions of the vernacular. But is it not in the geometric transformations introduced by colonial vernacular designer-builders, more than in any other factor, that we discover the essence of American creole architectural traditions? Is the eighteenth-century domestic architecture of Curaçao fully European in geometric form, or is it in part novel? Because the vernacular basis of the creole tradition is so hurriedly dealt with, the interesting relations between high style and vernacular are treated only minimally. Nevertheless, this book provides a wonderful first look at the origins and present configuration of an alternate Caribbean tradition. It is well written and beautifully illustrated. I recommend it to all students of American architectural history.

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Drie Curaçaose schrijvers in veelvoud. MARITZA COOMANS-EUSTATIA, H.E. COOMANS & WIM RUTGERS (eds.). Zutphen: De Walburg Pers, 1991. 544 pp. (Paper NLG 45.00)

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The editors of this book have taken a good initiative with this collection of essays on the three best-known writers from Curaçao: Boeli van Leeuwen, Tip Marugg, and Frank Martinus Arion. Thanks to a number of sponsors, the cloth bound book, with a number of photographs, is an *édition de luxe* indeed.

In their introduction, the editors mention the Antillian writer's dilemma of belonging: what language to use, where to be published, where to be read. The three writers concerned use the Dutch language mainly or exclusively as a means of communication, and they publish with Dutch publishers. This means that three kinds of critics deal with them: those who do not know the Caribbean and judge the work in a Netherlands-European context; those who have lived for a while in the Antilles or immigrated there; and Antillians whose views are rooted in the Antillian culture.

Insiders' and outsiders' views are presented here, giving a colorful mosaic of comments on the novels and poetry of the writers concerned. But who are the insiders and who the outsiders? Are the insiders the professional literary (and often Dutch) critics or the Antillians "rooted in the Caribbean culture"? Or should the literature be dealt with by professional Caribbean critics only? The editors had a broad and liberal view of the field and allowed all kinds of critics to present their views. This has certain advantages, of course, but in the present book it certainly also had disadvantages, because very little practical editing has been done. Thus, alas, there is quite a lot of repetitiousness; this could easily have been avoided if the editors had taken their job more seriously. Nevertheless, many interesting observations can be gleaned from the mixed harvest in this book.

The dilemma I mentioned earlier runs through the whole book: where do Curaçao writers belong and what cultural identity can they call their own when they write in the Dutch language, and thus for a largely Dutch audience? Perhaps there are two audiences, the Caribbean one understanding more of the cultural implications than the far-away Dutch one, and each of them reading these texts into and from a different cultural and literary context. The limited scope of Papiamentu and also of Dutch literature have had

serious consequences for the situation of Caribbean literatures in these languages: more often than not they have been completely ignored in anthologies and in general by anglophone and francophone publishers' translation policies. Although it has also been influenced by European (i.e., Dutch) traditions, this literature is rooted in the Caribbean cultural context.

In this brief review I cannot go into the details of the more than thirty essays. The first several are comparative, discussing the three writers in terms of particular elements, e.g., the female characters in their writing (mothers, wives, lovers), *makamba* (= European) images, readerships, or the relations between their art and their views of politics. In the next three sections, each of them is discussed separately. Each author's life, works, and relations with the Caribbean, Europe, other writers, philosophers, artists, etc. are discussed. The three of them refer in their novels to the central role women play in Antillian reality. The black woman in Boeli van Leeuwen's works is called "a key figure between the races." Thanks to her a racial war will never exist, because "the white man has buried his loneliness in the good black mother and between the white man and the black man stands the good black mother of both of them" (p. 32). The black woman is also a metaphor for the island, in Van Leeuwen's work as well as in Tip Marugg's. Still, black women do not play the main roles in the works of Van Leeuwen or Marugg. This contrasts with Frank Martinus Arion's novel *Dubbelspel*, which he dedicated "to courageous women." Here again, the male protagonists' position vis-à-vis women characterizes their relation with Curaçao and black culture.

The book also contains several interesting analyses of poetry by Marugg and Martinus Arion, and articles dealing with the reception of the three authors' works. The bibliographies following the series of essays of each of the three authors are detailed and careful: both the bibliography of their works and the bibliography on their works are quite complete. These bibliographies are an essential part of the book and constitute indispensable material for those who want to study these authors seriously. I would recommend further studies on Netherlands Antilles literatures that provide a systematic literary history of the oral and written literatures in the various languages of the islands and in-depth examination of the individual writers in the context of the Caribbean traditions to which they contribute. In order to be integrated in Caribbean literary history, these should be presented in English (and preferably also in French and Spanish). An edited selection from the essays of the present book would be a good step in that direction.

De rotstekeningen van Aruba/The Prehistoric Rock Drawings of Aruba. P. WAGENAAR HUMMELINCK. Utrecht: Uitgeverij Presse-Papier, 1991. 228 pp. (Paper NLG 73.00)

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Although the existence of the pre-Columbian rock art of Aruba was noticed as early as the 1830s, it was not until half a century later that Father A.J. van Koolwijk conducted a reconnaissance survey of the cave sites on the island, identifying numerous sites of Amerindian rock paintings and petroglyphs. During the 1950s-1970s Wagenaar Hummelinck continued Koolwijk's work, producing a series of articles on the rock art of Aruba, Curaçao, and Bonaire which were published in this journal. The present study is a most welcome compilation and update of the Aruba sections of these papers. It incorporates also the results of recent investigations of the island's rock art by Cornelis N. Dubelaar. The work is lavishly illustrated with photographs and line drawings; the Dutch text alternates with extensive English summaries.

In all, thirty-three sites of rock paintings are discussed, as well as one petroglyph site. (For some enigmatic reason the author calls the former "petrographs.") Seven sites represent caves in the coastal coral limestone area of Aruba; the remainder include quartz diorite rock shelters in the island's interior. Most sites are characterized by monochrome or bichrome paintings in red, brown or white; black or violet designs are rare. Unfortunately, the author refrains from any discussion of the meaning of Aruban rock art in terms of prehistoric Amerindian society. It seems obvious to this reviewer that the close association of Aruban rock paintings and petroglyphs with caves and rock shelters is significant. Since caves as well as lakes are typically viewed as entries to the underworld in past and present South American indigenous cosmology, these sites probably represented "specific activity" areas, which were visited by the local shaman in order to contact the realm of the spirits.

Similarly, issues of cultural affiliations, dating, and symbolic interpretation of Aruban rock art are not addressed by the author. Design motifs include mainly geometric and zoomorphic ornaments, which are represented at twenty-eight and seventeen sites, respectively, whereas anthropomorphic themes (two sites) and hand prints (two sites) are rare. According to Wagenaar Hummelinck, no well-defined groups of paintings can be distinguished. It is noteworthy, however, that various designs represent "pilot

motifs," as defined by Dubelaar (1986:126, 129) for the Venezuelan and Amazonian petroglyphs. These include geometric representations, such as the zigzag, rings-and-bar, back-to-back, framed cross, double spiral, concentric circles, and sun-and-rays designs, next to zoomorphic themes, notably frog-like paintings and the characteristic bird-drying-wings motif. All of this indicates strong cultural continuity with the mainland of South America, which is suggested also by the presence of various of these design elements among the rock art themes of the Central and West Venezuelan coastal zone, considered by Dubelaar (1986: Fig. 24B) to represent a distinct petroglyph "province."

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Economische transformatie en de staat: over agrarische modernisering en economische ontwikkeling in Suriname, 1930-1960. RUBEN S. GOWRICHARN. Den Haag: Uitgeverij Ruward, 1990. 208 pp. (Paper NLG 59.00)

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This book asks the very general question: what is the relationship between agrarian transition (*sic*) and development? In Gowricharn's view agrarian transition should generate a surplus in the form of means (of production), which can then be used to finance development/modernization of the economy. Modernization equals industrialization. Accordingly, his "central" question splits into two sub-questions about (1) the relationship between agrarian transition and the generation of means of production, and (2) the relationship between these means and development/industrialization. He is particularly interested in the role of the state in both.

To explore the first, he scans a wide range of theories about "the economic transformation to a modern society." He looks into classical and neo-classical economic theories (from Adam Smith to Rostow), sociological explanations of the emergence of capitalism (Weber, Parsons), and finally, another classic on the subject, Marx's theory of primitive accumulation.

This analysis leads to the conclusion that the three most important "elements" for the explanation of the transition to capitalism are the emergence of the market; the development of the productivity of labor; and the role of the state.

As Gowricharn is a professed marxist, the reader cannot be surprised by his decision to choose "marxism, more specifically the theory of primitive accumulation" as the basis for his "exploratory approach" to the subject. His contention is that the relation between "transformation" and development is covered more adequately in this theory than in others. Furthermore, only this theory pays sufficient attention to the emergence of the market, the resulting division of labor between urban and rural areas, and the application of technical knowledge to the process of production. Therefore, the theory can fruitfully be applied to the first part of his research question.

In a more cursory way he looks into a number of "theories of economic growth" to explore the relationship between means of production (the generated surplus of capital and labor) and industrialization. He finds a number of "generally accepted ideas" which fit quite well into his own framework: the agrarian sector is of crucial importance to economic development; modernization of agriculture provides the means for industrialization; and there is widespread recognition of the decisive role of the state in the processes of transformation and reallocation of resources.

The resulting "exploratory framework" is subsequently applied to Suriname. Gowricharn's aim is to test the validity of his theory on the "transformations" in Suriname agriculture between 1930 and 1960. He could not have chosen a more ill-suited country or a more ill-suited period for this purpose.

First, there is the fact that most theories used in his framework were formulated primarily to explain processes and relationships in large, closed economies in nineteenth-century Europe. Gowricharn acknowledges this but fails to take it into account when choosing the country to test his theory. Suriname is an extremely small and open economy of a special nature due to its plantation history. It would have been useful to look into some recent theories as well, especially those dealing with the specific characteristics of small economies.

Second, there is some lack of clarity about his definition of key terms like "transition" and "transformation." Transition should properly be reserved for the process of change from a pre-capitalistic to a capitalistic economy. The term transformation covers the structural changes within a capitalistic economy. Of course, Gowricharn knows that Suriname is a capitalistic economy of long standing. In his case study he uses the term transformation

correctly, but it seems a bit hazardous to choose Suriname as a testing ground for a theory in which the key term is agrarian transition.

Each of these points is in itself sufficient reason not to expect much from the application to Suriname of the theory of primitive accumulation. The theory *could* not be tested on an economy in which the relationships and processes to be studied are simply not there; the results are accordingly below par. The reader is repeatedly confronted with conclusions of a dubious nature, with arguments lacking consistency, forced operationalizations, and vulnerable interpretations.

However, the theoretical part of Gowricharn's book is quite interesting, as is his description of Suriname peasant agriculture between 1930 and 1960. It is only his attempt to combine the two parts of his study that gives rise to my criticisms. Each part could very well have been published on its own; the subjects are well researched and documented. Interesting and fruitful discussions may be expected in different academic circuits. In Marxist circles Gowricharn's ideas on the possibility of Marxist analysis of relations of production without a central role for concepts like class and class conflict should give rise to animated debate. The same holds true for his ingenious analysis of the role of the state in colonial societies. The chapters on the 1930-1960 period in Suriname are well written. His description of the situation and change in rural areas testifies to his thorough command of the available literature. And academics with expertise in Suriname matters will view with admiration his agrarian statistics – a field that is, especially in the period he covers, notorious for its unreliability.

Een macro-model van een micro-economie. M. VAN SCHAAIJK. Den Haag: STUSECO, 1991. 359 pp. (Paper NLG 40.00)

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The economy of Suriname is in distress today. There is a shortage of currency and the official economy is essentially replaced by the black market. Painful measures are necessary. However, the government not only lacks a comprehensive vision of how to deal with the problems, but the population seems, shortly after parliamentary elections, to have lost confidence in its leaders.

Writing a Ph.D. thesis on the economy of Suriname under these circumstances seems a thankless task. Marein van Schaaik, who was the first pioneer in building up the National Accounting System for Suriname in the 1970s, and an experienced officer of the Dutch National Planning Bureau today, took it on. His study implies the construction of an empirical macro-model for analysis and simulation of actual economic development, with different possible strategies. For a small, open economy like Suriname, a researcher is confronted with the problem that the law of large numbers does not apply in the export sector, because 90 percent of exports is furnished by only eleven products. Prices, volumes, and investments in the export sector are dominated by accidental factors, making it difficult to discover the underlying behavioral relationships. The author solved this problem by building a micro-block for an entrepreneurial approach, consisting of special price, production, and investment functions for every export product, making it not only feasible to incorporate the export sector in the model, but offering an opportunity to build a bridge across the river which divides business-economics and macro-economics – in other words, to study the interaction between costs and prices at the micro level, and production, economic growth, and incomes on the macro one.

Furthermore, the model contains a government block. Because Suriname has two major sources of foreign exchange and government funds (bauxite and development aid), there seemed to be no limit to the expansion of government intervention. The mid-1970's showed an increase in these revenues. Even in the formulation of development policy, where in addition to government actions, behavior by business is explicitly included, and consideration is given to the operation of markets including determination of the exchange rate, an empirical macro-economic model is necessary and needs to contain a micro-block concerning business behavior.

The first part of the thesis (Chapters 1-3) contains the development of concepts such as scale of the economy, the micro-approach, and the usefulness of behavioral equations. Chapter 4 contains a collection of data and the production of statistics: this task is dealt with in the "Micromacrodataset" published separately. Chapter 5 constructs the macro-micro model MAC-MIC: equations are estimated over 1954-87. Chapter 6 offers five historical simulations with the complete model, used for the analysis of the socio-economic development in 1954-87. Finally in Chapter 7, the model is used for simulations of possible development strategies in various periods including 1988-2001. A number of additional disks enable readers to engage in further exploration.

With the surgeon's knife of the experienced registrar and analyst, the author did an immense, comprehensive, and pioneering work of research

that may open doors for studying other very small economies which he dubs "Microland," a subject approached reluctantly by most economic researchers because of structural obstacles. Here I would offer one warning about relying too much on pure micro relations: different products do have different cost components, but they also have different scopes of information, across the world market and over time. But, for Suriname, this is a minor complaint; the model provides a valuable instrument for adequate development policy to overcome the present crisis.

An English language summary of this dissertation has been published as "A Macro Model for a Small Economy," with additional models for microland and the small country of Malta (NLG 50.00, demo disk included).

Hindostanen in Nederland. CORSTIAAN VAN DER BURG, THEO DAMSTEEGT & KRISHNA AUTAR. Leuven (Belgium)/ Apeldoorn (the Netherlands): Garant Publishers, 1990. 223 pp. (Paper NLG 33.50)

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This volume on the transformation of Suriname East Indian culture and way of life treats subjects as diverse as education, upbringing, religion, language, social assistance, and eating habits. Some chapters are scientific and precise (e.g., those by K. Ali, K. Autar and R. Gaiinda), while others are more discursive and contemplative.

In the first chapter Ruben Gowricharn analyzes clearly and critically the cultural and social economic position of East Indians in the period from 1873 to the present. His definition of the second generation as "brown whites who grow up in no man's land and are extremely vulnerable" (p. 19) is only partly true. Modern socialization theories employ the concept of multiple identity, a central notion concerning second generation immigrants, that seems a more appropriate term for this group. Chapter 2, by T. Damsteegt, contains a good overview of the development that led to a certain acknowledgment of Sarnami as a fully Suriname language, and a description of the concrete form this development took in primary (creative) and secondary literature and other activities. The investigation by D. de Haan and G. Ramnandanlal into linguistic attitudes and language control of Sarnami and Dutch shows that most East Indian children in Suri-

name have reasonable control of Sarnami and that the interference from Dutch tends to be limited to the lexicon.

Karen Ali, who deals with reading and writing problems specific to Hindu children in primary schools, concludes tentatively that Hindustani pupils have more such problems than Dutch pupils. In connection with this, she gives some concrete suggestions for supporting and helping these children. In the next four chapters, which deal with religion, the widening gap between the young and the elderly is discussed. The authors state that the number of visits to the mosque or temple have dramatically decreased among the younger generation. In "Hindus and Their Religious Identity," C. van der Burg argues that the Hindu community's inability to support its own temple is due to "a lack of homogeneity and ... conflicting interests within the community" (p. 105).

On the same subject N. Boedhoe's chapter asserts that "moslims have a disproportionately large number of mosques, in relation to Hindus and temples," and that this is not primarily due to financial support by outside organizations, but rather to their own spirit of sacrifice for communal good. It could also be due to the fact that the Hindu community is relying too much on government support in the form of subsidies. The articles about the Sanatan Dharm and the Arya Samaj discuss the position of the priests and controversial issues concerning the separation of state and church in light of the reports of the Waardenburg commission (1985) and the Hirsch Ballin commission (1988).

In a quite readable article, K. Autar discusses the academic performance of Hindustani children in different kinds of schools. At the primary school level he notes that Hindustani children achieve low results in abstract cognitive subjects. His observation that children in The Hague who are referred to special schools often end up in schools for slow learners is alarming and requires action. In the chapter on education, A. Ramlall-Kormeling discusses, on the basis of data collected from twelve families in The Hague, the complex interplay of factors at work in the upbringing of Hindustani children. She draws a clear picture of educational values, aims, and roles and the allocation of tasks between boys and girls in the same family. This is material that could lead to further research. The article by Gainda about formal and informal help and support is enlightening and written mainly from practical experience. It should be compulsory reading at universities. The last article deals with the eating habits of eight-year-old pupils in the Bijlmer (Amsterdam), and highlights differences in eating patterns between people from Suriname and the Netherlands.

This volume is informative and should be read by everybody who is involved with the Hindu population in the Netherlands. Some of its illustrative material could, however, have been published separately.

Woordenboek van het Surinaams-Nederlands. J. VAN DONSELAAR. Muiderberg: Dick Coutinho, 1989. 482 pp. (Cloth NLG 59.50)

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The 1989 edition of the *Woordenboek van het Surinaams-Nederlands* is a revised and expanded version of the dictionary published in 1977 under the same title. It contains 6600 entries with words and expressions from Suriname Dutch (hereafter SuD) that either do not exist in Standard Dutch (StD) or differ in meaning or usage. Many of these denote concepts that are typical for Suriname and for which there was or is no term in StD. Thus, a high proportion of the entries concern names of animals, trees, plants, flowers, and fruits, and more general terms for species and families; in addition, there are separate indices on the scientific names for flora and fauna. There is also a StD-SuD index and a list of spelling variants of SuD words.

The dictionary proper occupies nearly 400 pages. Each entry supplies, among other things, a description (in Dutch) of the meaning of the headword, usually followed by one or more illustrating citations. The latter are particularly illuminating in those cases where a speaker of StD might wonder in what respect a certain SuD word differs from a parallel StD form. However, the difference is not clear in all instances. This problem can be attributed partly to the fact that the SuD items are taken from a variety of sources and domains, ranging from eighteenth-century travel accounts to present-day spoken language, professional terminology, and literary texts, whereas the StD forms they are compared with are from dictionaries that do not always reflect a similarly wide range. Moreover, had Van Donselaar used the extended Van Dale StD dictionary from 1984, he would have come across meanings he now considers not to belong to StD.

Additional information on a word is provided under the heading of "etymology," not a very well chosen term considering the diversity of the remarks. These include comments on the meaning and usage of a StD counterpart of the word in question, or on the characteristics of an object to explain the term denoting it, or a Sranan form on which the SuD form might have been calqued. For items from languages other than Dutch, a source language is given; this can be the language that provided the form directly, for example, Sranan, or a more indirect source, for example, Carib. Surprisingly few words are referred to as deriving from African languages; in the introduction the latter are, incorrectly, not even mentioned as possible sources.

The intended audience of the dictionary are speakers of SuD, in particular those involved in education in Suriname. More generally, the author wants to contribute to the acknowledgment of SuD as a variant of Dutch in its own right and to draw attention to Suriname culture and nature, in both the past and the present. For this reason, he has deliberately included information which would be more appropriate in an encyclopedia than in a dictionary. Although in general the information provided is interesting, readers will sometimes wonder about the criteria for inclusion, and will have trouble escaping the impression that the author has published all the information he collected.

A similar criticism could be made with regard to the selection of headwords. For example, an item attested once in an eighteenth-century source can hardly be interesting for the average speaker of SuD. Such items are presumably included to serve another purpose mentioned by the author: providing material for linguistic research. In this respect, the dictionary certainly is inspiring; although the information included seems somewhat arbitrary in some cases, it provokes curiosity about matters only touched upon.

Given that the *Woordenboek* does not pretend to be exhaustive and complete in all respects, it is an impressive piece of work which contains a lot of interesting data on SuD.

"Cultuur in beweging": creolisering en Afro-Caraïbische cultuur. MICHEL BAUD & MARIANNE C. KETTING (eds.). Rotterdam: Bureau Studium Generale, 1989. 93 pp. (Paper NLG 15.00)

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Dutch universities have the good habit of initiating series of lectures, designated "Studium Generale," on scientific subjects for a wider public. In 1988 a symposium and a series of lectures on the Caribbean were organized under the auspices of the Afro-Carib Foundation and the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. Creolization and Afro-Caribbean culture became the keywords for this series of lectures. The peoples deported from Africa have not abandoned their culture; nor have they forgotten it. They have given it a new shape and adapted it to a new situation. Cultural creativity is probably the most obvious feature of the Caribbean area.

The volume "*Cultuur in beweging*" (Culture in Motion) contains the written texts of this series of lectures, transcribed straight from the tape in one case (Hoetink's lecture), somewhat rewritten by the speakers in the other cases. All the articles are more or less introductions, with a lot of attention to cultural innovations in the sphere of language, art, literature, music, and film. The booklet includes cultural historical views from Michiel Baud (on creolization and Afro-Caribbean culture), Harry Hoetink (creole culture), and Glenn Willemsen (Afro-Caribbean culture and world civilization). Herman Wekker's contribution on the origin and history of Sranan Tongo, the creole language of Suriname, is informative and clear. Another linguist, Geert Koefoed, also dealt with Suriname, by introducing the creole literature of that country written both in Dutch and Sranan Tongo. I consider the contribution of the Jamaican cultural historian and choreographer, Rex Nettleford, "Creolisation in the Caribbean Arts," as the apex of the volume. It may have been fascinating to meet the Colombian composer and musician Francisco Zumaqué during the series of lectures, but the level of his lecture did not match the quality of his music. The self-styled Antillian film maker Felix de Rooy gave a cast-iron lecture on the development of theatre and film on the Dutch Antilles: with the feeling for theatre, nicely subjective and of a highly literary level.

Within the framework of a series of lectures there is always a choice to be made. However, in other important aspects, for instance in the field of religion and the formation of new societies (Maroon societies), the Caribbean seems to have looked for extremely creative cultural solutions, aspects not discussed in this volume. Because Studium Generale lectures are meant for a broad public, listeners should not be overloaded with footnotes and references to literature. The question is whether one should maintain the same policy when a series of lectures is collected in a volume. The interested layman who buys the book probably expects a bit more, but the more initiated reader will quickly put it aside after perusal. This is the reason why "Culture in Motion" has not become a contribution for which each and every Caribbeanist should hurry to the bookshop.